


THE  
CHRISTMAS  
TREASURY



An illustration at the top of the page. On the left is a building with a tall steeple. On the right, two winged figures (angels) are shown in a cloud-like formation, appearing to be in flight or dancing.

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An illustration at the bottom of the page. It depicts a landscape with a path leading through a field towards a building. There are trees and a fence in the foreground. The style is a simple line drawing.

Division

Section



Mr. Temple Scott's book blends old and new, and arranges the rich material under the winning headings, The Christmas of the Home, of the Soul, of the Wanderer, of Religion, with generous sheaves of Christmas carols and hymns at the close. Most of the poems are of course by unknown authors. Among those that can be named, Lady Lindsay has by far the leading place, with eleven numbers; Herrick follows with six, Bishop Brooks, Selwyn Image, Rossetti and Vaughn have each four; Katherine Tynan, Whittier and Wither, three each. Seventy-two other poets are represented by one or two poems. We would not leave this book without a word of appreciation for the far from perfunctory "Introduction on Christmas," as the witness to the spirit of joy at the foundation of Christianity, a considerable part of which is printed in another column.



THE CHRISTMAS TREASURY









✓ The  
Christmas  
Treasury  
of  
Song and Verse

Compiled by ✓  
Temple Scott

New York  
The Baker & Taylor Co.  
1910



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Published, October, 1910

PRESS OF WILLIAM G. HEWITT

61-67 NAVY STREET

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

TO  
DORIS  
FROM HER HOPING FATHER

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*"The flighty purpose never is o'ertook  
Unless the deed go with it: from this moment  
The very firstlings of my heart shall be  
The firstlings of my hand."*



*The Editor gratefully acknowledges  
his indebtedness to Mr. Bliss Car-  
man for permission to use the extract  
from his poem, "Christmas Eve at  
St. Kavin's."*





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## INTRODUCTION

IF there be one day in the calendar more than any other which bears witness to the spirit of joy at the foundation of Christianity, it is surely that of Christmas. In its double meaning of festival and holy day, it links the fine instinct of the old unconscious world with the high wisdom of the seeing modern life. The feast of the holly and mistletoe may commemorate the ever-fruitful strength of the earth's life, despite winter's snows and frosts; but the holy day of the birth of Jesus Christ is the day of an event of far profounder import for us than the promise of mere material comfort. What to Druid priests was a sign of good, is become for us a symbol of grace; what to them was an evidence for hope, is for us made a message of assurance. They were gladdened in the drear days by the promise



of the spring and the harvests to come ; we joy in the silent nights in the abounding grace of a knowledge of the presence among us of the living God. For in the coming of the man Christ we realized, for the first time, the Spirit that is in all things—in hearts as well as in harvests.

If ever a religion dare appoint a Day of At-one-ment, Christianity would surely be justified in setting Christmas Day as such a day ; for is it not the day on which the human and divine were made one ; the day on which this unity was made manifest ? And is not that a matter for joy ? Is it not also a moving thought for self-purification ?

Joy comes naturally when the heart is clean. How more cleanly can we purify the heart than by leaving it free for the play of the gracious impulses that make for beneficence and love ? And beneficence and love are, as they should be, of the very air of Christmas. "Peace on earth ; good-will to men," was the message. In peace the earth grows kindly and beneficent ; with good-will men grow kinly and loving. In peace the earth laughs in its harvests ; in good-will men joy in their gifts.



As the one blossoms and flower in peace, so does the other flower and blossom in love. Each gives its fruit-offering through joy. And it is in joy alone that we ourselves most fully realize our at-one-ment with the creative impulse of this universe of ours.

If we are children of God in any real sense then must we be children of joy. But, in this turmoil of work and strife, it is not easy for us to be either children or joyous. Worshippers of Mammon are slaves to a jealous god, and they know not how to lift up their hearts in gladness. They have sold their birthright of freedom for a mess of pottage. When they try to be children they look like satyrs leering as lovers. Thank God, then, for happy children to remind us of what we once were, and what we still may be, if we but learn the lesson of their emancipating joy.

Rightly has Christmas been made the children's festival. Every child is a saviour, who is come to save us from degrading ambitions, and to take us by the hand and to lead us to pleasanter fields and sweeter pastures than those which we, by our cunning and craft, have made for ourselves. They know better





than we what is good for the soul; they are nearer than we are to the life of things.

As once again this season of good-will and good-cheer comes round, let us leave, for a time at least, the turning of the wheels of chance. Let us permit the finer qualities in our humanity to have their play. It is not too late to be young and of "the happy people." It is the time for rejoicing and thanksgiving. But, indeed, we shall not be able to help ourselves. A spiritual fact is more stable and more magnetic than the everlasting hills. It will have its way. And there are few more compelling forces than the thoughts which have been enshrined in a great event. The holy day is a holiday indeed; for love itself is at play. As the midnight chimes peal forth the advent of Christmas a very host of invisible forces rise up and bear us on. The ghosts of thousands of Christmases past pass before us with appealing benedictions. Our minds become chambers haunted with beneficent presences.

We may forget our birthdays and even the anniversaries of our marriage, but Christmas comes and insists on being celebrated. Indeed, we have no option in the matter. Times may



be bad, wars may wage, tempests may rage, politics may plague, sickness may devastate; but the herald of the coming Feast of the Children is certain to sound his trumpet call, and as with the magic pipe of the Pied Piper of Hamelin, thousands of little pattering feet will spring alert and alive to its meaning. It fills the air with music. Its note may not be melodious, but the laughter of the children softens its discords so that it comes to us reminiscent of our childhood's day's, when the world was young, and everything went very well, and Santa Claus was near, and dear, and real.

It should be a blessed time for us even though we are growing old. It is our yearly rejuvenation, our annual reminder of "the good old times," the anniversary of days when all was golden and rosy and transfigured in an ideal reality that no experience can improve and no learning make more glorious. Leave us our Christmases and we can well afford to let go almost all the other ties that bind memory's strands to the supporting posts of life. In ministering to the delight of children we keep our own hearts young; we drink again of the springs of life so that a new thrill



of the divine influence passes from them to us. Our wrinkles are smoothed out by the placidity of our feelings; our furrows are unknit and become the lines of laughter; our mumblings are coherent in the stress of sympathy; our cacklings take on a resonance that smacks of joyous forgetfulness. We are reborn in the celebration of the new birth. "The sun doth shake light from his locks, and all the way breathing perfumes doth spice the day."

This happy custom of serving the little ones inspires us to carry the service further. We give to each other also, and we delight in an unconscious make-believe. We also are once more children at play. We welcome this opportunity to steep our sophisticated minds in a sea of generous emotion which floats buoyantly our Ship of Brotherhood and Good Will. We are not so bad as we thought we were, each to the other, during the rest of the year. We have no "axes to grind" this day, no stocks to sell, no business to promote. The games of the market-place are set aside for other games. At "Blindman's Buff" we may hurt our shins—our hearts are not broken; and if our pockets are opened, it is by the graceful and deli-



cate hand of Our Lady of Charity. Old dames nod to each other pleasantly, and talk of the dances and merry-makings of the days long gone, and of the Johns and Charlies who kissed them under the mistletoe at the Christmas of long ago when the snow fell three feet in the night. And the Johns and Charlies, now bald-headed and ruddy-faced, dig each other in the ribs and remind one another of the pretty girls they also kissed under the mistletoe on that Christmas of long ago, when the snow fell three feet in the night. Ah! but those were the days when boys were boys and girls girls! And papas smile at mammas, and brothers flirt with the other fellows' sisters, and cousins joke each other, and uncles and aunts find new nephews and nieces, and even mother-in-law thinks her Lucy's husband a worthy man; and all sing "Auld Lang Syne" together to make a new "Syne" for a future looking back and the hallowing of a new experience in the shrine of a perfumed memory. Thus do these Christmas merry-makers become memory-makers; builders of real palaces of joy—mansions for the soul to live in happiness.

It was, indeed, a fine wisdom that gave us



this one day, at least, in the year, in which to be truly free; in which we might dare to throw aside the mask and show the kindly heart in the smiling face. "What you thought of me yesterday or what you think of me to-morrow is not the true me; the true me is here and now on this Christmas morning. Your hand, brother!" Let us be glad together because we no longer fear each other, but can take joy in each other. And, mayhap, if the habit grow with us, in love and in truth, this spirit of Christmas shall spread its beneficence over all the days of our lives. For we are brethren together, in the life of the great saint who was born on this day.

"O, most illustrious of the days of time!" a poet once apostrophized Christmas day. Illustrious in that it is the day of the rebirth of our real selves; of the quickening in us of that spirit which is our most splendid possession for this earthly life and our profoundest assurance of divine grace.

TEMPLE SCOTT.



## THE CHRISTMAS OF THE HOME

### CHRISTMAS

C hrist, Christ, is born to-day!  
H oly be thy holiday.  
R ise betimes, and haste away,  
I n thy church to kneel and pray,  
S urely from thine heart to say:  
T hou, O Lord, will I obey.

M any poor around there be—  
A lms give thou, and sympathy,  
S o God's blessing 'light on thee.

LADY LINDSAY.

But my song I troll out, for Christmas stout,  
The hearty, the true, and the bold;  
A bumper I drain, and with might and main  
Give three cheers for this Christmas old.

CHARLES DICKENS.  
(*"The Pickwick Papers."*)





## A Visit From St. Nicholas

'T WAS the night before Christmas, when  
all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with  
care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be  
there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their  
beds,  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their  
heads;  
And mamma in her kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's  
nap—  
When out on the lawn there arose such a  
clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the  
matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below;



When, what to my wondering eyes should appear,

But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,  
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.

More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled and shouted, and called them  
by name:

“Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer  
and Vixen!

On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder and Blitzen!

To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!”

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane  
fly,

When they meet with an obstacle, mount to  
the sky,

So up to the house-top the coursers they flew,  
With the sleigh full of toys,—and St. Nicholas, too.

And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.



As I drew in my head, and was turning  
around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a  
bound.  
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his  
foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes  
and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a peddler just opening his  
pack.

His eyes, how they twinkled! his dimples, how  
merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a  
cherry;  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the  
snow.  
The stump of a pipe held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a  
wreath.  
He had a broad face, and a little round belly  
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl full  
of jelly.



He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old  
elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of  
myself.  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his  
work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with  
a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a  
whistle,  
And away they all flew, like the down of a  
thistle;  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of  
sight,  
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-  
night!"

CLEMENT C. MOORE.

## A Christmas Carol for Children

GOOD news from heaven the angels bring,  
Glad tidings to the earth they sing:  
To us this day a child is given,  
To crown us with the joy of heaven.

This is the Christ, our God and Lord,  
Who in all need shall aid afford;  
He will Himself our Saviour be,  
From sin and sorrow set us free.

To us that blessedness He brings,  
Which from the Father's bounty springs:  
That in the heavenly realm we may  
With Him enjoy eternal day.

All hail, Thou noble Guest, this morn,  
Whose love did not the sinner scorn!  
In my distress Thou cam'st to me:  
What thanks shall I return to Thee?

Were earth a thousand times as fair,  
Beset with gold and jewels rare,



She yet were far too poor to be  
A narrow cradle, Lord, for Thee.

Ah, dearest Jesus, Holy Child!  
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,  
Within my heart, that it may be  
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

Praise God upon His heavenly throne,  
Who gave to us His only Son:  
For this His hosts, on joyful wing,  
A blest New Year of mercy sing.

MARTIN LUTHER.

## In Bethlehem, that Noble Place

I N Bethlehem, that noble place,  
As by prophecy said it was,  
Of the Virgin Mary full of grace,  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

Be we merry in this feast,  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

On Christmas night an angel it told  
To the shepherdes, keeping their fold,





That into Bethlehem with beasts wold  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

Be we merry in this feast,  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

The shepherdes were compassed right,  
About them was a full great light;  
Dread ye nought, said the angel bright,  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

Be we merry in this feast,  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

Behold, to you we bring great joy;  
For why Jesus is born this day;  
To us, of Mary, that mild May,  
*Salvator mundi natus est.*

Be we merry in this feast,  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

And thus in faith find it ye shall,  
Lying poorly in an oxes stall.  
The shepherdes then God lauded all,  
*Quia Salvator mundi est.*

Be we merry in this feast,  
*In quo Salvator natus est.*

*A.D. 1550.*



## The Shepherds

O THAN the fairest day, thrice fairer  
night!

Night to blest days in which a sun doth rise,  
Of which that golden eye which clears the  
skies

Is but a sparkling ray, a shadow-light!

And blessed ye, in silly pastor's sight,

Mild creatures, in whose warm crib now lies  
That heaven-sent Youngling, holy maid-born  
Wight,

Midst, end, beginning of our prophecies!

Blest cottage that hath flowers in winter  
spread,

Though withered—blessed grass that hath  
the grace

To deck and be a carpet to that place!

Thus sang, unto the sounds of oaten reed,

Before the Babe, the shepherds bowed on  
knees,

And springs ran nectar, honey dropped from  
trees.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND,  
*of Hawthornden.*



## Ceremonies For Christmas

COME, bring with a noise,  
My merrie, merrie boyes,  
The Christmas Log to the firing;  
While my good Dame, she  
Bids ye all be free,  
And drink to your heart's desiring.

With the last yeere's brand  
Light the new block, and  
For good successe in his spending,  
On your Psaltries play,  
That sweet luck may  
Come while the Log is a-teending.

Drink now the strong Beere,  
Cut the white Loafe here,

The while the meat is a-shredding  
For the rare Mince Pie,  
And the Plums stand by  
To fill the Paste that's a-kneading.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"Hesperides."*)



## Christmas Eve—Another Ceremony

COME, guard this night the Christmas Pie,  
That the Thiefe, though ne'er so slie,  
With his Flesh-hooks don't come nie  
To catch it

From him, who all alone sits there,  
Having his eyes still in his care,  
And a deale of nightly feare,  
To watch it.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"Hesperides."*)



## Another Ceremony to the Maids

WASH your hands, or else the fire  
Will not teend to your desire;  
Unwasht hands, ye maidens, know,  
Dead the fire, though ye blow.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"Hesperides."*)

## Another

WASSAILE the Trees, that they may  
beare  
You many a Plum, and many a Peare;  
For more or lesse fruits they will bring  
As you doe give them Wassailing.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"Hesperides."*)



## A Rocking Hymn

SWEET baby, sleep ! What ails my dear ?  
What ails my darling thus to cry ?  
Be still, my child, and lend thine ear  
To hear me sing thy lullaby.  
My pretty lamb, forbear to weep ;  
Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep !

When God with us was dwelling here,  
In little babes He took delight ;  
Such innocents as thou, my dear,  
Are ever precious in His sight.  
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep !

A little Infant once was He,  
And strength in weakness then was laid  
Upon His virgin-mother's knee,  
That power to thee might be conveyed.  
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep !

In this thy frailty and thy need  
He friends and helpers doth prepare,



Which thee shall cherish, clothe, and feed,  
For of thy weal they tender are.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep!  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings, when He was born,  
Had not so much for outward ease ;  
By Him such dressings were not worn,  
Nor such like swaddling-clothes as these.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep!  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,  
Where oxen lay and asses fed ;  
Warm rooms we do to thee afford,  
An easy cradle or a bed.

My baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep !

Thou hast, yet more, to perfect this,  
A promise and an earnest got  
Of gaining everlasting bliss,  
Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.  
Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

GEORGE WITHER.



## Old Christmas

**L**O now is come our joyful'st feast ;  
Let every man be jolly.  
Each room with ivy leaves is dress'd,  
And every post with holly.  
Though some churls at our mirth repine,  
Round your foreheads garlands twine,  
Drown sorrow in a cup of wine,  
And let us all be merry.

Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke,  
And Christmas blocks are burning ;  
Their ovens they with baked meats choke,  
And all their spits are turning.  
Without the door let sorrow lie,  
And if for cold it hap to die,  
We'll bury it in a Christmas pie,  
And evermore be merry.

Now every lad is wondrous trim,  
And no man minds his labour ;  
Our lasses have provided them  
A bagpipe and a tabor.





Young men and maids, and girls and boys,  
Give life to one another's joys,  
And you anon shall by their noise  
Perceive that they are merry.

Rank misers now do sparing shun,  
Their hall of music soundeth,  
And dogs thence with whole shoulders run,  
So all things there aboundeth.  
The country folks themselves advance,  
With crowdy-muttons come out of France;  
And Jack shall pipe, and Jill shall dance,  
And all the town be merry.

Ned Swash has fetch'd his bands from pawn,  
And all his best apparel;  
Brisk Nell hath bought a ruff of lawn,  
With droppings of the barrel;  
And those that hardly all the year  
Had bread to eat or rags to wear  
Will have both clothes and dainty fare,  
And all the day be merry.

Now poor men to the justices  
With capons make their arrants,



And if they hap to fail of these,  
They plague them with their warrants.  
But now they feed them with good cheer,  
And what they want they take in beer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year,  
And then they shall be merry.

Good farmers in the country nurse  
The poor, that else were undone.  
Some landlords spend their money worse,  
On lust and pride in London.  
There the roysters they do play,  
Drab and dice their lands away,  
Which may be ours another day,  
And therefore let's be merry.

The client now his suit forbears,  
The prisoner's heart is eased,  
The debtor drinks away his cares,  
And for the time is pleased.  
Though others' purses be more fat,  
Why should we pine or grieve at that?  
Hang sorrow, care will kill a cat,  
And therefore let's be merry.



Hark, now the wags abroad do call  
Each other forth to rambling ;  
Anon you'll see them in the hall  
    For nuts and apples scrambling.  
Hark, how the roofs with laughter sound !  
Anon they'll think the house goes round,  
For they the cellar's depth have found,  
    And there they will be merry.

The wenches with their wassail bowls  
    About the streets are singing ;  
The boys are come to catch the owls,  
    The wild mare in is bringing.  
Our kitchen-boy hath broke his box,  
And to the dealing of the ox  
Our honest neighbours come by flocks,  
    And here they will be merry.

Now kings and queens poor sheepcotes have,  
    And mate with everybody ;  
The honest now may play the knave,  
    And wise men play at noddie.  
Some youths will now a-mumming go,  
Some others play at rowland-hoe,  
And twenty other gameboys, moe,  
    Because they will be merry.



Then, wherefore, in these merry days  
Should we, I pray, be duller?  
No; let us sing some roundelays  
To make our mirth the fuller.  
And, whilst inspirèd thus we sing,  
Let all the streets with echoes ring;  
Woods and hills, and everything,  
Bear witness we are merry.

GEORGE WITHER.

## The Christmas Carol

THE minstrels played their Christmas tune  
To-night beneath my cottage eaves;  
While, smitten by a lofty moon,  
The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,  
Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,  
That overpowered their natural green.

Through hill and valley every breeze  
Had sunk to rest with folded wings:  
Keen was the air, but could not freeze,  
Nor check, the music of the strings;



So stout and hardy were the band  
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand ;

And who but listened?—till was paid  
Respect to every inmate's claim :  
The greeting given, the music played,  
In honor of each household name,  
Duly pronounced with lusty call,  
And "Merry Christmas" wished to all !

O Brother ! I revere the choice  
That took thee from thy native hills :  
And it is given thee to rejoice,  
Though public care full often tills  
(Heaven only witness of the toil)  
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet, would that thou, with me and mine,  
Hadst heard the never-failing rite,  
And seen on other faces shine  
A true revival of the light  
Which Nature and these rustic Powers,  
In simple childhood, spread through ours.

For pleasure hath not ceased to wait  
On these expected annual rounds,



Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate  
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,  
Or they are offered at the door  
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when at midnight sweep  
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,  
To hear—and sink again to sleep!  
Or, at an earlier call, to mark  
By blazing fire the still suspense  
Of self-complacent innocence;

The mutual nod—the grave disguise  
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er—  
And some unbidden tears that rise  
For names once heard, and heard no more;  
Tears brightened by the serenade  
For infant in the cradle laid.

Ah! not for emerald fields alone,  
With ambient streams more pure and bright  
Than fabled Cytherea's zone,  
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,  
Is to my heart of hearts endeared  
The ground where we were born and reared!



Hail, ancient Manners ! sure defence,  
Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;  
Remnants of love whose modest sense  
Thus into narrow room withdraws ;  
Hail, Usages of pristine mold,  
And ye that guard them, Mountains old !

Bear with me, Brother ! quench the thought  
That slights this passion, or condemns ;  
If thee fond Fancy ever brought  
From the proud margin of the Thames,  
And Lambeth's venerable towers,  
To humbler streams and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,  
Short leisure even in busiest days,  
Moments to cast a look behind,  
And profit by those kindly rays  
That through the clouds do sometimes steal,  
And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the imperial City's din  
Beats frequent on thy satiate ear,  
A pleased attention I may win  
To agitations less severe,



That neither overwhelm nor cloy,  
But fill the hollow vale with joy!

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

*(To Rev. Dr. Wordsworth, with the Sonnets  
to the River Duddon, and other poems.)*

## Cradle Song

HUSH! my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy Angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,  
House and home, thy friends provide;  
All without thy care or payment,  
All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou 'rt attended  
Than the Son of God could be,  
When from heaven He descended,  
And became a child like thee!





Soft and easy is thy cradle ;  
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay ;  
When His birthplace was a stable,  
And His softest bed was hay.

See the kinder shepherds round Him,  
Telling wonders from the sky !  
Where they sought Him, there they found  
Him,  
With His Virgin-Mother by.

See the lovely Babe a-dressing ;  
Lovely Infant, how He smiled !  
When He wept, the Mother's blessing  
Soothed and hush'd the holy Child.

Lo, He slumbers in His manger,  
Where the hornéd oxen fed :  
Peace, my darling, here's no danger ;  
Here's no ox a-near thy bed !

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,  
Trust and love Him all thy days ;  
Then go dwell for ever near Him,  
See His face, and sing His praise !



I could give thee thousand kisses,  
Hoping what I most desire ;  
Not a mother's fondest wishes  
Can to greater joys aspire.

ISAAC WATTS.

## Old Christmas-Tide

HEAP on more wood!—the wind is chill ;  
But let it whistle as it will,  
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.  
Each age has deemed the new-born year  
The fittest time for festal cheer.  
Even heathen yet, the savage Dane  
At Iol more deep the mead did drain ;  
High on the beach his galley drew,  
And feasted all his pirate crew ;  
Then in his low and pine-built hall,  
Where shields and axes decked the wall,  
They gorged upon the half-dressed steer ;  
Caroused in seas of sable beer ;  
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown  
The half-gnawed rib and marrow-bone,



Or listened all, in grim delight,  
While scalds yelled out the joy of fight,  
Then forth in frenzy would they hie,  
While wildly loose their red locks fly;  
And, dancing round the blazing pile,  
They make such barbarous mirth the while,  
As best might to the mind recall  
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.  
And well our Christian sires of old  
Loved when the year its course had rolled,  
And brought blithe Christmas back again,  
With all his hospitable train.  
Domestic and religious rite  
Gave honor to the holy night:  
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;  
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;  
That holy night, in all the year,  
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.  
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;  
The hall was dressed with holly green;  
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,  
To gather in the mistletoe;  
Then opened wide the baron's hall  
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;  
Power laid his rod of rule aside,  
And ceremony doffed his pride.



The heir, with roses in his shoes,  
That night might village partner choose ;  
The lord, underogating, share  
The vulgar game of "post and pair."  
All hailed, with uncontrolled delight,  
And general voice, the happy night  
That to the cottage, as the crown,  
Brought tidings of salvation down.  
The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Went roaring up the chimney wide ;  
The huge hall-table's oaken face,  
Scrubbed till it shone, the day to grace,  
Bore then upon its massive board  
No mark to part the squire and lord.  
Then was brought in the lusty brawn  
By old blue-coated serving man ;  
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,  
Crested with bays and rosemary.  
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,  
How, when and where, the monster fell ;  
What dogs before his death he tore,  
And all the baiting of the boar.  
The Wassail round, in good brown bowls,  
Garnished with ribbons, blithely trowls.  
There the huge sirloin reeked ; hard by  
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie ;



Nor failed old Scotland to produce,  
At such high tide, her savory goose.  
Then came the merry masquers in,  
And carols roared with blithesome din ;  
If unmelodious was the song,  
It was a hearty note, and strong,  
Who lists may in their mumming see  
Traces of ancient mystery ;  
White shirts supplied the masquerade,  
And smutted cheeks the vizors made :

But, O ! what masquers, richly dight,  
Can boast of bosoms half so light !  
England was merry England, when  
Old Christmas brought his sports again.  
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale ;  
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;  
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer  
The poor man's heart through half the year.  
SIR WALTER SCOTT.



## Christmas Day

THE time draws near the birth of Christ :  
The moon is hid ; the night is still ;  
The Christmas bells from hill to hill  
Answer to each other in the mist.

Four voices of four hamlets round,  
From far and near, on mead and moor,  
Swell out and fail, as if a door  
Were shut between me and the sound :

Each voice four changes on the wind,  
That now dilate and now decrease,  
Peace and good-will, good-will and peace,  
Peace and good-will to all mankind.

This year I slept and woke with pain,  
I almost wish'd no more to wake,  
And that my hold on life would break  
Before I heard those bells again :



But they my troubled spirit rule,  
For they controll'd me when a boy ;  
They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,  
The merry, merry bells of Yule.

With such compelling cause to grieve  
As daily vexes household peace,  
And chains regret to his decease,  
How dare we keep our Christmas eve ;

Which brings no more a welcome guest  
To enrich the threshold of the night  
With shower'd largess of delight  
In dance and song and game and jest ?

Yet go, and while the holly boughs  
Entwine the cold baptismal font,  
Make one wreath more for Use and Womb,  
That guard the portals of the house ;

Old sisters of a day gone by,  
Gray nurses, loving nothing new ;  
Why should they miss their yearly due  
Before their time ? They, too, will die.



With trembling fingers did we weave  
The holly round the Christmas hearth ;  
A rainy cloud possess'd the earth,  
And sadly fell our Christmas eve.

At our old pastimes in the hall  
We gamboll'd, making vain pretence  
Of gladness, with an awful sense  
Of one mute Shadow watching all.

We paused : the winds were in the beech :  
We heard them sweep the winter land ;  
And in a circle hand in hand  
Sat silent, looking each at each.

Then echo-like our voices rang ;  
We sang, though every eye was dim,  
A merry song we sang with him  
Last year : impetuously we sang :

We ceased : a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us : surely rest is meet :  
"They rest," we said, "their sleep is sweet,"  
And silence followed, and we wept.





Our voices took a higher range ;  
Once more we sang : "They do not die  
Nor lose their mortal sympathy,  
Nor change to us, altho' they change ;

"Rapt from the fickle and the frail  
With gathered power, yet the same,  
Pierces the keen seraphic flame  
From orb to orb, from veil to veil."

Rise, happy morn ; rise, holy morn ;  
Draw forth the cheerful day from night :  
O Father, touch the east, and light  
The light that shone when Hope was born.

ALFRED TENNYSON.  
*In Memoriam.*



## Children's Christmas Eve

REJOICE in God always,  
With stars in Heaven rejoice,  
Ere dawn of Christ's own day  
Lift up each little voice.  
Look up with glad, pure eye,  
And count those lamps on high.  
Nay, who may count them? On our gaze  
They from their deeps come out in ever-  
widening maze.

Each in his stand aloof  
Prepares his keenest beam  
Upon that hovel roof,  
In at that door, to stream  
Where meekly waits her time  
The whole earth's Flower and Prime:—  
Where in few hours the Eternal One  
Will make a clear, new day, rising before the  
sun.

Rejoice in God always,  
With each green leaf rejoice,  
Of berries on each spray  
The brightest be your choice.



From bower and mountain lone  
The autumnal hues are gone,  
Yet gay shall be our Christmas wreath,  
The glistening beads above, the burnish'd  
leaves beneath.

Rejoice in God always,  
With Powers rejoice on high,  
Who now with glad array  
Are gathering in the sky,  
His cradle to attend,  
And there all lowly bend.  
But half so low as He hath bow'd  
Did never highest Angel stoop from brightest  
cloud.

Rejoice in God always,  
All creatures, bird and beast;  
Rejoice, again I say,  
His mightiest and His least;  
From ox and ass that wait  
Here on His poor estate,  
To the four living Powers, decreed  
A thousand ways at once His awful car to  
speed.



Rejoice in God alway ;  
With Saints in Paradise  
Your midnight service say,  
For vigil glad arise.  
Ev'n they in their calm bowers  
Too tardy find the hours  
Till He reveal the wondrous Birth :  
How must we look and long, chain'd here to  
sin and earth !

Ye babes, to Jesus dear,  
Rejoice in Him alway.  
Ye whom He bade draw near,  
O'er whom He loved to pray,  
Wake, and lift up the head,  
Each in his quiet bed.  
Listen ! His voice the night wind brings :  
He in your cradle lies, He in our carol sings.

JOHN KEBLE.



COME down to-marra night, and mind  
Don't leave thy fiddle-bag behind.  
We'll shaik a lag and drink a cup  
O' yal to kip wold Chris'mas up.

An' let thy sister tiake thy yarm,  
The wa'k woon't do 'er any harm.  
Ther's noo dirt now to spwile her frock,  
Var 'tis a-vroze so hard's a rock.

Ther bent noo stranngers that 'ull come,  
But only a vew naighbours; zome  
Vrom Stowe, an' Combe, an' two ar dree  
Vrom uncle's up at Rookery.

An' thee woot vine a ruozy fiace,  
An' pair ov eyes so black as sloos,  
The pirtiest oones in al the pliace,  
I'm sure I needen tell thee whose.

We got a black bran', dree girt logs,  
So much as dree ov us can car.  
We'll put 'em up athirt the dogs,  
An' miake a vier to the bar.



An' ev'ry oone wull tell his tale,  
An' ev'ry oone wull zing his zong,  
An' ev'ry oone wull drink his yal,  
To love an' frien'ship al night long.

We'll snap the tongs, we'll have a bal,  
We'll shiake the house, we'll rise the ruf,  
We'll romp an' miake the maidens squal,  
A-catchen o'm at bline-man's buff.

Zoo come to-marra night, an' mind  
Don't leave thy fiddle-bag behind.  
We'll shiake a lag, an' drink a cup  
O' yal to kip wold Chris'mas up.

WILLIAM BARNES.

## A Christmas Carol

I care not for spring: on this fickle wing  
Let the blossoms and buds be borne:  
He woos, them amain with his treacherous  
rain,  
And he scatters them ere the morn.



An inconstant elf, he knows not himself  
Nor his own changing mind an hour,  
He'll smile in your face, and, with wry  
grimace,  
He'll wither your youngest flower.

Let the summer sun to his bright home run,  
He shall never be sought by me;  
When he's dimmed by a cloud I can laugh  
aloud,  
And care not how sulky he be!  
For his darling child is the madness wild  
That sports in fierce fever's train;  
And when love is too strong, it don't last long,  
As many have found to their pain.

A mild harvest night, by the tranquil light  
Of the modest and gentle moon,  
Has a far sweeter sheen, for me, I ween,  
Than the broad and unblushing noon  
But every leaf awakens my grief,  
As it lieth beneath the tree;  
So let autumn air be never so fair,  
It by no means agrees with me.



But my song I trol out, for CHRISTMAS stout,  
The hearty, the true, and the bold;  
A bumper I drain, and with might and main  
Give three cheers for this Christmas old!

We'll usher him in with a merry din  
That shall gladden his joyous heart.  
And we'll keep him up, while there's bite or  
sup,  
And in fellowship good we'll part.

In his fine, honest pride, he scorns to hide  
One jot of his hard-weather scars;  
They're no disgrace, for there's much the same  
trace

On the cheeks of our bravest tars.  
Then again I sing, till the roof doth ring,  
And it echoes from wall to wall—  
To the stout old wight, fair welcome to-night,  
As the King of the Seasons all!

CHARLES DICKENS.



## The Angel's Story

THROUGH the blue and frosty heavens  
Christmas stars were shining bright ;  
Glistening lamps throughout the City  
Almost matched their gleaming light ;  
While the winter snow was lying,  
And the winter winds were sighing,  
Long ago, one Christmas night.

While from every tower and steeple  
Pealing bells were sounding clear  
(Never with such tones of gladness  
Save when Christmas time is near),  
Many a one that night was merry  
Who had toiled through all the year.

That night saw old wrongs forgiven,  
Friends, long parted, reconciled ;  
Voices all unused to laughter,  
Mournful eyes that rarely smiled,  
Trembling hearts that feared the morrow,  
From their anxious thoughts beguiled.



Rich and poor felt love and blessing  
From the gracious season fall;  
Joy and plenty in the cottage,  
Peace and feasting in the hall;  
And the voices of the children  
Ringing clear above it all!

ADELAIDE A. PROCTER.

## The Mahogany Tree

CHRISTMAS is here;  
Winds whistle shrill,  
Icy and chill,  
Little care we:  
Little we fear  
Weather without,  
Sheltered about  
The mahogany tree.

Once on the boughs,  
Birds of rare plume  
Sang, in its bloom;  
Night birds are we:



Here we carouse,  
Singing like them,  
Perched round the stem  
Of the jolly old tree.

Here let us sport,  
Boys, as we sit;  
Laughter and wit  
Flashing so free.  
Life is but short—  
When we are gone,  
Let them sing on,  
Round the old tree.

Evenings we knew,  
Happy as this;  
Faces we miss,  
Pleasant to see.  
Kind hearts and true,  
Gentle and just,  
Peace to your dust!  
We sing round the tree.

Care, like a dun,  
Lurks at the gate:



Let the dog wait :  
Happy we'll be !  
Drink, every one ;  
Pile up the coals,  
Fill the red bowls,  
Round the old tree !

Drain we the cup—  
Friend, art afraid ?  
Spirits are laid  
In the Red Sea.  
Mantle it up ;  
Empty it yet ;  
Let us forget,  
Round the old tree.

Sorrows, begone !  
Life and its ills,  
Duns and their bills,  
Bid we to flee.  
Come with the dawn,  
Blue-devil sprite,  
Leave us to-night,  
Round the old tree,

W. M. THACKERAY.

## The End of the Play

THE play is done—the curtain drops,  
Slow falling to the prompter's bell;  
A moment yet the actor stops,  
And looks around, to say farewell.  
It is an irksome word and task,  
And when he's laugh'd and said his say,  
He shows, as he removes the mask,  
A face that's anything but gay.

One word, ere yet the evening ends :  
Let's close it with a parting rhyme,  
And pledge a hand to all young friends,  
As fits the merry Christmas time.  
On life's wide scene you, too, have parts,  
That fate ere long shall bid you play ;  
Good-night!—with honest, gentle hearts  
A kindly greeting go away !

Good-night ! I'd say the griefs, the joys,  
Just hinted in this mimic page,  
The triumphs and defeats of boys,  
Are but repeated in our age ;



I'd say your woes were not less keen,  
Your hopes more vain, than those of men,  
Your pangs or pleasure of fifteen  
At forty-five played o'er again.

I'd say we suffer and we strive  
Not less nor more as men than boys,  
With grizzled beards at forty-five,  
As erst at twelve in corduroys;  
And if, in time of sacred youth,  
We learn'd at home to love and pray,  
Pray heaven that early love and truth  
May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,  
I'd say how fate may change and shift,  
The prize be sometimes with the fool,  
The race not always to the swift;  
The strong may yield, the good may fall,  
The great man be a vulgar clown,  
The knave be lifted over all,  
The kind cast pitilessly down.

Who knows the inscrutable design?  
Blessed be He who took and gave!



Why should your mother, Charles, not mine,  
Be weeping at her darling's grave?  
We bow to heaven that will'd it so,  
That darkly rules the fate of all,  
That sends the respite or the blow,  
That's free to give or to recall.

This crowns his feast with wine and wit—  
Who brought him to that mirth and state?  
His betters, see, below him sit,  
Or hunger hopeless at the gate.  
Who bade the mud from Dives' wheel  
To spurn the rags of Lazarus?  
Come, brother, in that dust we'll kneel,  
Confessing heaven that rul'd it thus.

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,  
Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely kill'd;  
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance,  
And longing passion unfulfill'd.  
Amen! Whatever fate be sent,  
Pray God the heart may kindly glow,  
Although the head with cares be bent  
And whiten'd with the winter snow.  
Come wealth or want, come good or ill,  
Let young and old accept their part,



And bow before the awful will,  
And bear it with an honest heart.  
Who misses or who wins the prize—  
Go, lose or conquer as you can ;  
But if you fail, or if you rise,  
Be each, pray God, a gentleman.

A gentleman, or old or young !  
(Bear kindly with my humble lays)  
The sacred chorus first was sung  
Upon the first of Christmas days ;  
The shepherds heard it overhead—  
The joyful angels rais'd it then ;  
Glory to heaven on high, it said,  
And peace on earth to gentlemen !

My song, save this, is little worth ;  
I lay the weary pen aside,  
And wish you health and love and mirth,  
As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.  
As fits the holy Christmas birth,  
Be this, good friends, our carol still :  
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,  
To men of gentle will.

W. M. THACKERAY.





## The Christmas Mistletoe

WHEN winter nights grow long,  
And winds without blow cold,  
We sit in a ring round the warm wood fire  
And listen to stories old!  
And we try to look grave (as maids should  
be)  
When the men bring in boughs of the laurel  
tree.  
O the laurel, the evergreen tree!  
The poets have laurels—and why not we?

How pleasant, when night falls down,  
And hides the wintry sun,  
To see them come in to the blazing fire,  
And know that their work is done;  
Whilst many bring in, with a laugh or rhyme,  
Green branches of holly for Christmas time!  
O the holly, the bright green holly!  
It tells (like a tongue) that the times are  
jolly!

Sometimes—(in *our* grave house  
Observe this happeneth not)



But at times, the evergreen laurel boughs  
And the holly are all forgot!  
And then! what then? Why, the men laugh  
low,  
And hang up a branch of the mistletoe!  
Oh, brave is the laurel! and brave is the  
holly!  
But the mistletoe banisheth melancholy!  
Ah, nobody knows, nor ever *shall* know,  
What is done under the mistletoe!

BARRY CORNWALL.

## Christmas Bells

I HEARD the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat,  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom



Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
And with the sound  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearthstones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;



“For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!”

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep :  
“God is not dead, nor doth He sleep !  
The Wrong shall fail,  
The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men !”

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

## Under the Holly Bough

YE who have scorn'd each other,  
Or injured friend or brother,  
In this fast fading year ;  
Ye who, by word or deed,  
Hath made a kind heart bleed,  
Come gather here.  
Let sinn'd against and sinning  
Forget their strife's beginning ;  
Be links no longer broken,  
Be sweet forgiveness spoken,  
Under the holly bough.



Ye who have lov'd each other,  
Sister and friend and brother,  
    In this fast fading year ;  
Mother, and sire, and child,  
Young man and maiden mild,  
    Come gather here ;  
And let your hearts grow fonder,  
As memory shall ponder  
    Each past unbroken vow.  
Old loves, and younger wooing,  
Are sweet in the renewing,  
    Under the holly bough.

Ye who have nourished sadness,  
Estranged from hope and gladness,  
    In this fast fading year ;  
Ye with o'erburdened mind,  
Made aliens from your kind,  
    Come gather here.  
Let not the useless sorrow  
Pursue you night and morrow ;  
    If e'er you hoped—hope now ;  
Take heart ; uncloud your faces,  
And join in our embraces  
    Under the holly bough.

CHARLES MACKAY.



## They Leave the Land of Gems and Gold

THEY leave the land of gems and gold,  
The shining portals of the East;  
For Him, the woman's Seed foretold,  
They leave the revel and the feast.

To earth their scepters they have cast,  
And crowns by kings ancestral worn;  
They track the lonely Syrian waste;  
They kneel before the Babe new born.

O happy eyes that saw Him first!  
O happy lips that kissed His feet!  
Earth slakes at last her ancient thirst,  
With Eden's joy her pulses beat.

True kings are those who thus forsake  
Their kingdoms for the Eternal King;  
Serpent, her foot is on thy neck;  
Herod, thou writhest, but canst not sting.



He, He is King, and He alone,  
Who lifts that infant hand to bless;  
Who makes His mother's knee His throne,  
Yet rules the starry wilderness.

AUBREY DE VERE.

## A Christmas Carol

THERE'S a song in the air!  
There's a star in the sky!  
There's a mother's deep prayer  
And a baby's low cry!  
And the star rains its fire while the Beautiful  
sing,  
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king.

There's a tumult of joy  
O'er the wonderful birth,  
For the Virgin's sweet boy  
Is the Lord of the earth.  
Ay! the star rains its fire and the Beautiful  
sing,  
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a king.



In the light of that star  
Lie the ages impearled ;  
And that song from afar  
Has swept over the world.  
Every hearth is aflame and the Beautiful sing  
In the homes of the nations that Jesus is King.

We rejoice in the light,  
And we echo the song  
That comes down through the night  
From the heavenly throng.  
Ay! we shout to the lovely evangel they bring,  
And we greet in his cradle our Saviour and  
King.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND.

## A Lullaby for Christmas

SLEEP, baby, sleep! The mother sings:  
Heaven's angels kneel and fold their  
wings.

Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep! The father cries:  
Stars lean and worship from the skies.





Sleep, baby, sleep!  
With swathes of scented hay Thy bed  
By Mary's hand at eve was spread.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

At midnight came the shepherds, they  
Whom angels wakened by the way.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

And three kings from the East afar,  
Ere dawn, came, guided by Thy star.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

They brought Thee gifts of gold and gems,  
Pure Orient pearls, rich diadems.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

But Thou, who liest slumbering there,  
Art King of kings, earth, stars, and air.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

Sleep, baby, sleep! The shepherds sing:  
Through earth, through heaven, hosannas  
ring.  
Sleep, baby, sleep!

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.



## Christmas Once Is Christmas Still

THE silent skies are full of speech  
For who hath ears to hear ;  
The winds are whispering each to each,  
The moon is calling to the beech,  
And stars their sacred mission teach,  
Of Faith, and Love, and Fear.

But once the sky its silence broke,  
And song o'erflowed the earth,  
The midnight air with glory shook,  
And angels mortal language spoke,  
When God our human nature took,  
In Christ the Savior's birth.

And Christmas once is Christmas still ;  
The gates through which He came,  
And forests wild and murmuring rill,  
And fruitful field and breezy hill,  
And all that else the wide world fill,  
Are vocal with His name.



Shall we not listen while they sing,  
This latest Christmas morn,  
And music hear in everything,  
And faithful lives in tribute bring  
To the great song which greets the King  
Who comes when Christ is born?

The sky can still remember  
The earliest Christmas morn,  
When in the cold December  
The Savior Christ was born;  
And still in darkness clouded,  
And still in noonday light,  
It feels its far depths crowded  
With Angels fair and bright.

O never failing splendor!  
O never silent song!  
Still keep the green earth tender,  
Still keep the gray earth strong;  
Still keep the brave earth dreaming  
Of deeds that shall be done,  
While children's lives come streaming  
Like sunbeams from the sun.



No star unfolds its glory,  
No trumpet's wind is blown,  
But tells the Christmas story  
In music of its own.  
No eager strife of mortals,  
In busy fields or town,  
But sees the open portals  
Through which the Christ came down.

O Angels sweet and splendid,  
Throng in our hearts, and sing  
The wonders which attended  
The coming of the King;  
Till we, too, boldly pressing  
Where once the Angel trod,  
Climb Bethlehem's Hill of Blessing,  
And find the Son of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.



## The Voice of the Christ-Child

THE earth has grown cold with its burden  
of care,

But at Christmas it always is young.

The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,  
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the  
air,

When the song of the Angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming to-night ;

On the snowflakes which cover thy sod,

The feet of the Christ-child fall gently and  
white,

And the voice of the Christ-child tells out with  
delight

That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and the lonely, the wretched and  
poor,

That voice of the Christ-child shall fall ;

And to every blind wanderer opens the door  
Of a hope which he dared not to dream of  
before,

With a sunshine of welcome for all.



The feet of the humblest may walk in the field  
Where the feet of the holiest have trod ;  
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed,  
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have  
    pealed,  
That mankind are the children of God.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

## Merry Christmas

I N the rush of the merry morning,  
When the red burns through the gray,  
And the wintry world lies waiting  
For the glory of the day,  
Then we hear a fitful rushing  
Just without, upon the stair,  
See two white phantoms coming,  
Catch the gleam of sunny hair.

Are they Christmas fairies, stealing  
Rows of little socks to fill?  
Are they Angels floating hither  
With their message of good-will?



What sweet spell are these elves weaving,  
As like larks they chirp and sing?  
Are these palms of peace from heaven  
That these lovely spirits bring?

Rosy feet upon the threshold,  
Eager faces peeping through,  
With the first red ray of sunshine  
Chanting cherubs come in view;  
Mistletoe and gleaming holly,  
Symbols of a blessed day,  
In their chubby hands they carry,  
Streaming all along the way.

Well we know them, never weary  
Of their innocent surprise:  
Waiting, watching, listening always  
With full hearts and tender eyes,  
While our little household angels,  
White and golden in the sun,  
Greet us with the sweet old welcome—  
“Merry Christmas, every one!”

*Author Unknown.*



## Christmas Bells

**H**ARK! the Christmas bells are ringing—  
    Ringing through the frosty air—  
Happiness to each one bringing,  
    And release from toil and care.

How the merry peal is swelling  
    From the gray old crumbling tower,  
To the simplest creature telling  
    Of Almighty love and power.

Ankle-deep the snow is lying,  
    Every spray is clothed in white,  
Yet abroad the folk are hieing,  
    Brisk and busy, gay and light.

Now fresh helps and aid are offered  
    To the agéd and the poor,  
And rare love exchanges proffered  
    At the lowliest cottage door.

Neighbors shaking hands and greeting,  
    No one sorrowing, no one sad,





Children, loving parents meeting,  
Young and old alike are glad.

Then while Christmas bells are ringing,  
Rich and poor, your voices raise,  
And—your simple carol singing—  
Waft to heaven your grateful praise.

*Author Unknown.*

## The Delights of Christmas

WHEN Christmas approaches, each bosom  
is gay,  
That festival banishes sorrow away;  
While Richard he kisses both Susan and Dolly,  
When tricking the house up with ivy and holly;  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.

Then comes turkey and chine, with the famous  
roast beef,  
Of English provisions still reckoned the chief;



Roger wishes the cook-maid his wishes to  
crown,  
“Oh, Dolly! pray give me a bit of the brown;”  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.

The luscious plum pudding does smoking  
appear,  
And the charming mince pie is not far in the  
rear;  
Then each licks his chops to behold such a  
sight,  
For to taste it affords him superior delight;  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.

Now the humming October goes merrily  
round,  
And each with good humor is happily crown'd,  
The song and the dance, and the mirth-giving  
jest,  
Alike without harm by each one is expressed,  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.



Twelfth Day next approaches, to give you  
delight,  
And the sugar'd rich cake is display'd to the  
sight;  
Then sloven and slut, and the King and the  
Queen,  
Alike must be present to add to the scene;  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.

May each be found thus as the year circles  
round,  
With mirth and good humor each Christmas  
be crown'd,  
And may all who have plenty of riches in store  
With their bountiful blessings make happy the  
poor;  
For never as yet it was counted a crime  
To be merry and cherry at that happy time.

*Author Unknown.*



## December

NAY, no closed doors for me,  
But open doors and open hearts and glee  
To welcome young and old.

Dimmest and brightest month am I;  
My short days end, my lengthening days  
begin;  
What matters more or less sun in the sky  
When all is sun within?

*[December begins making a wreath as he  
sings.]*

Ivy and privet, dark as night,  
I weave with hips and haws a cheerful show,  
And holly for a beauty and delight,  
And milky mistletoe.

While high above them all I set  
Yew twigs and Christmas roses pure and  
pale;  
Then Spring her snowdrop and her violet  
May keep, so sweet and frail;



May keep each merry singing bird,  
Of all her happy birds that singing build :  
For I've a carol which some shepherds heard  
Once in a wintry field.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

(*"The Months"—December.*)

### 'Neath Mistletoe

'N<sup>E</sup>ATH mistletoe, should chance arise,  
You may be happy if you're wise.  
Though bored you lie with pantomime  
And Christmas fare and Christmas rhyme—  
One fine old custom don't despise.

If you're a man of enterprise,  
You'll find, I venture to surmise,  
'Tis pleasant then at Christmas time  
'Neath mistletoe!

You see they scarcely can disguise  
The sparkle of their pretty eyes ;  
And no one thinks it is a crime,  
When goes the merry Christmas chime,  
A rare old rite to exercise  
'Neath mistletoe!

J. ASHBY STERRY.



## A Christmas Carol

'TIS merry 'neath the mistletoe,  
When holly berries glisten bright;  
When Christmas fires gleam and glow,  
When wintry winds so wildly blow,  
And all the meadows round are white—  
'Tis merry 'neath the mistletoe!

How happy then are Fan and Flo,  
With eyes a-sparkle with delight!  
When Christmas fires gleam and glow,  
When dainty dimples come and go,  
And maidens shrink with feignèd fright—  
'Tis merry 'neath the mistletoe!

A privilege 'tis then, you know,  
To exercise time-honored rite;  
When Christmas fires gleam and glow,  
When loving lips may pout, although  
With other lips they oft unite—  
'Tis merry 'neath the mistletoe!



If Flossy then should whisper "No!"

Such whispers should be stifled quite,  
When Christmas fires gleam and glow;  
If Fanny's coy, objecting "Oh!"

Be strangled by a rare foresight—  
'Tis merry 'neath the mistletoe!

When rosy lips, like Cupid's bow,  
Assault provokingly invite,  
When Christmas fires gleam and glow,  
When slowly falls the sullen snow,  
And dull is drear December night—  
'Tis merry 'neath the mistletoe!

J. ASHBY STERRY.

## Ballade of Christmas Ghosts

**B**ETWEEN the moonlight and the fire,  
In winter twilights long ago,  
What ghosts we raised for your desire,  
To make your merry blood run slow!  
How old, how grave, how wise we grow!  
No Christmas ghost can make us chill,  
Save those that troop in mournful row—  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.



The beasts can talk in barn and byre  
On Christmas Eve, old legends know.  
As year by year the years retire,  
We men fall silent then, I trow,  
Such sights hath memory to show,  
Such voices from the silence thrill,  
Such shapes return with Christmas snow—  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

Oh, children of the village choir,  
Your carols on the midnight throw!  
Oh, bright across the mist and mire,  
Ye ruddy hearts of Christmas, glow!  
Beat back the dread, beat down the woe,  
Let's cheerily descend the hill;  
Be welcome all, to come or go—  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

*Envoy.*

Friend, *sursum corda*, soon or slow  
We part, like guests who've joyed their fill;  
Forget them not, nor mourn them so—  
The ghosts we all can raise at will.

A. LANG.





## The Christmas of the Sorrowful

THE shops are decked ; green wreaths hang  
fair to see ;  
Our town is gay with mirth and jollity ;  
The people crowd, and laugh and dance in  
hall—  
'Tis Christmas Day, a merry festival !

And sweet the story how, from Heaven's own  
gate,  
The King's Son came, so left His mighty state,  
While angels sang, "Glory to God on high,  
And on earth peace, for Christ new-born doth  
lie."

Then shepherds marveled, and a beauteous  
star  
Guided the wise men from the Orient far,  
To bend the knee where, in poor stable-rest,  
The Virgin-Mother clasped her babe on breast.

Yet some there be that turn aside and weep :  
Some in whose life grief's canker gnaws o'er-  
deep,



Some racked by pain or crushed by blindness'  
pall,  
And some to cruel sickness bound in thrall ;

Some that stretch helpless hands across the  
flood  
Which bore their dear ones from all worldly  
good—  
Fain would they drag those pale ghosts back,  
and cry,  
“If Death take all I love, then I must die!”

And some starve daily, deeming rich folk hard,  
While others from love's comfort stand de-  
barr'd,  
And some burn fierce in hate, revenge or  
wrong—  
Such fever, bred of injury, stays long.

Some, groping at Faith's door in misty doubt,  
Are worn by conflict, from the Truth shut out.  
To all these woful souls a Christmas morn  
Brings but new grief and weariness forlorn.

Then bid them gaze toward Calvary's dark hill,  
Where He, our Sacrifice, bleeds for us still—



Sinless, compassionate—for me, for you.  
Yea, mortal anguish to the full He knew.

Misjudged He was, poor, mocked, in thought  
    most lone;  
Scarce counted He a scrip or staff His own.  
He wept, ne'er laughed, and His few years on  
    earth  
Were toilsome, void of praise, success or  
    mirth.

Faint hearts! Christ's message wings not to  
    the glad.  
He calls the blind, the lame, the sick, the sad.  
The Christmas of the Sorrowful, for sure,  
Within His own short span did He endure.

When here His latest wintry days were spent  
He wrestled sore in prayer, and silent went  
Out to the desert, sorrow-led, where dim  
The future loomed, and Death encompassed  
    Him.

His hours as holy stairs led up to God—  
Steps that His aching, bruised feet slow trod.



Dwell ye on this, ye that repine and fret,  
That He may lift and walk beside you yet.

Bare earth and naked trees on every side  
We see around us at chill Christmas-tide;  
Yet, later, shall the crocus buds of gold  
Flame o'er this dank and desolate brown mold.

So shines the promise of each Christmas Day;  
Though dark our path, our Guide shall lead  
the way.

Here is good cheer, for Christ hath taught us  
peace—

The Man of Sorrows bids our sorrow cease.

LADY LINDSAY.

## Ring the Bells

RING the bells,  
Ring the bells,  
Ring the merry Christmas bells,  
And let their voice resound  
Around, around,  
Till o'er the leas and o'er the fells



The gladsome echo loudly tells  
    How we to-day  
    Are blithe and gay,  
And how for all sad hearts we pray.  
    Ring the bells,  
    Ring the bells,  
Ring the joyful Christmas bells!

    Ring the bells,  
    Ring the bells,  
Ring the merry Christmas bells.  
    So ring them high and low,  
    O'er ice and snow,  
O'er craggéd hills and silent dells,  
While round the earth the message swells,  
    How we to-day  
    Are blithe and gay,  
And how for all sad hearts we pray.  
    Ring the bells,  
    Ring the bells,  
Ring the joyful Christmas bells!

LADY LINDSAY.



## The Coming of Christmas

CHRISTMAS is a-drawing near,  
Christmas-tide and Christmas cheer,  
Merry wassail, merry song,  
Joyous dance and roundelay—  
All that doth to Yule belong.  
Yet unto my soul I say,  
“Thou that slumberest, wake and pray.”

Christmas is a-nearing quite,  
Time of feast and full delight,  
Pleasant pomp and allegresse,  
Harp and viol’s music gay,  
Jeweled tokens, gaudy dress.  
Yet unto my soul I say,  
“Thou that slumberest, wake and pray.”

Christmas—Sheahan—Fifteen  
Christmas is a-chiming soon,  
Bringing Love for choicest boon,  
Pensioners to sit in hall,  
Comrades, friends of many a day,  
Greeting fair from great and small.  
Yet unto my soul I say,  
“Thou that slumberest, wake and pray.”

LADY LINDSAY.



## Christmas Communion

COME in, dear Babe, and rest!  
Cold is the night, and keen;  
Here is no Mother with her milky breast,  
Her long hair's silken screen,  
To hide from Thee the stable, poor and mean.

There are no angel-folk  
Hung between Heaven and earth,  
Making the night a glory, and no flock  
Of stars that sing for mirth  
Because of the wonderful, long-looked for  
Birth.

It is so dark and cold,  
Colder than Bethlehem was;  
Here are no sheets with lavender in fold,  
Nor even the pleachéd grass.  
Cold as a stone, cold is my heart, alas!

But two gaunt beasts are here,  
Not meet for Thy delight;  
Ox of my appetites, misspent and drear,



Ass of my folly light,  
Hanging their heads, Thy courtiers are to-  
night.

Not like those innocent things  
That shook the bed for Thee;  
Here are no shepherd men, here are no kings  
With gifts in their degree;  
Cold, bare, and empty, yet wilt come to me?

Cold as the clay, and hard,  
Yet wilt Thou come as of yore?  
I who have neither gold nor spikenard,  
Thou Hope as long before!  
For Thee, for Thee, the stable waits once more.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

## The Pedlar

I T'S Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky and the flock's  
in the fold.





A pedlar came to the homestead gate  
With his pack and his pike, and weary was  
he;  
He said, "See wares from heaven to buy you!  
Who will chaffer his heart with me?"

It's Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky, and the flock's in the  
fold.

The farmer laughed: "For a quittance from  
hell  
Here's all I've left of a heart for ye!"  
Quoth the goodwife: "For a heavenly man-  
sion  
Take, and you're welcome, my heart in fee!"

It's Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky, and the flock's in the  
fold.

The younker bought him a kingly crown,  
The men got glory in bliss to be;  
The maids chose harps and golden garments,  
Cried "Good-e'en!" and "Good-by!" said he.



It's Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky, and the flock's in the  
fold.

But the youngest of all said never a word,  
Her hand to her flaxen head held she;  
Till, just as he passed the door, she whispered,  
"Here's my heart, as a gift for thee!"

It's Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky, and the flock's in the  
fold.

It's feasting day, and the feast's in heaven,  
And there are our folk, all fair to see.  
"Have they left no room for My own little  
maiden?  
Come, she must sit on the throne with Me!"

It's Christmas Eve, and the dogs are a-cold,  
And the star's in the sky, and the lamb's in the  
fold!

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

## A Christmas Chime

KEEP time, keep time, glad Christmas  
chime!

Loud, louder sing thy song sublime;  
Ne'er half enough can e'er be told  
Of that dear story, sweet and old.  
Hark, men and women—children, too—  
List to the wondrous tale anew,  
How long ago, in land afar,  
The shepherds saw the shining star;  
Heard echoed strains of harp and lyre  
Attuned to thrill of angel choir.

Keep time, keep time, wild, joyful chime!  
Bid every heart keep Christmas time—  
Let there be none so worn and weary,  
Let there be none so lone and dreary,  
That thy rich music may not fill  
With happiness and fond good-will:  
With just a bit of hope and cheer,  
A firmer trust in heaven near,  
A sense of sacred, new-found rest,  
That Jesus sleeps on Mary's breast.



Keep time, keep time, blest Christmas chime!  
Repeat thy message true, sublime,  
Unto the mighty, to the lowly,  
Unto the sinner, to the holy:  
Bid them live on in gentle peace,  
Their strife and hatred all to cease;  
And bid them come, not, as of old,  
With frankincense, myrrh, gems and gold,  
But with the nobler—love's own proffer—  
Unto their God their hearts to offer.

KATHLEEN KAVANAGH.

## St. Bride's Lullaby

O H, Baby Christ, so dear to me,  
Sang Bridget Bride:  
How sweet thou art,  
My baby dear,  
Heart of my heart!

Heavy her body was with thee,  
Mary, beloved of One in Three,  
Sang Bridget Bride—  
Mary, who bore thee, little lad;



But light her heart was, light and glad,  
With God's love clad.

Sit on my knee,  
Sang Bridget Bride;  
Sit here,  
O Baby dear,  
Close to my heart, my heart,  
For I thy foster-mother am,  
My helpless lamb!  
Oh, have no fear,  
Sang good St. Bride.

None, none,  
No fear have I;  
So let me cling  
Close to thy side,  
While thou dost sing,  
O Bridget Bride!

My Lord, my Prince, I sing:  
My Baby dear, my King!  
Sang Bridget Bride.

FIONA MACLEOD.



## Santa Claus

HE comes in the night! He comes in the  
night!

He softly, silently comes,  
While the little brown heads on the pillows so  
white

Are dreaming of bugles and drums.  
He cuts through the snow like a ship through  
the foam,

While the white flakes around him whirl.  
Who tells him I know not, but he findeth the  
home

Of each good little boy and girl.

His sleigh it is long, and deep, and wide ;

It will carry a host of things,  
While dozens of drums hang over the side,  
With the sticks sticking under the strings.

And yet not the sound of a drum is heard,  
Not a bugle blast is blown,  
As he mounts to the chimney-top like a bird,  
And drops to the hearth like a stone.



The little red stockings he silently fills,  
Till the stockings will hold no more ;  
The bright little sleds for the great snow hills  
Are quickly set down on the floor.  
Then Santa Claus mounts to the roof like a  
bird,  
And glides to his seat in the sleigh ;  
Not the sound of a bugle or drum is heard  
As he noiselessly gallops away.

He rides to the East, and he rides to the West,  
Of his goodies he touches not one ;  
He eateth the crumbs of the Christmas feast  
When the dear little folks are done.  
Old Santa Claus doeth all that he can ;  
This beautiful mission is his ;  
Then, children, be good to the little old man  
When you find who the little man is.

ANON.



## A Christmas Greeting

A MERRY Christmas morning  
To each and every one!  
The rose has kissed the dawning,  
And the gold is in the sun.

And may the Christmas splendor  
A joyous greeting bear,  
Of love that's true and tender  
And faith that's sweet and fair.

*Author Unknown.*





## At the Sign of the Jolly Jack

YOU merry folk, be of good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year.  
From open door you'll take no harm  
By winter if your hearts are warm.  
So ope the door, and hear us carol  
The burthen of our Christmas moral.  
Be ye merry and make good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year ;  
Scrape the fiddle and beat the drum,  
And bury the night ere morning come.

57—Christmas (left over from 1st batch copy  
There was an inn beside a track,  
As it might be, the Jolly Jack ;  
Upon a night, whate'er its name,  
There kept they Christmas all the same.  
They sit in jovial round at table,  
While Christ was lying in the stable.  
They make merry and have good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year ;  
They scrape the fiddle and beat the drum,  
And they'll bury the night ere morning  
come.



The jolly landlord stands him up,  
And welcomes all to bite and sup;  
He has a hearty face and red,  
He knows not Who lies in his shed.  
What harm, if he be honest and true,  
That he may be Christ's landlord too?

So he makes merry and has good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year;  
He scrapes his fiddle and beats his drum,  
And he'll bury the night ere morning come.

The landlord's son sits in his place,  
He bows his head and says his grace;  
He leads his partner to the dance,  
And the light of love is in his glance.  
If his thoughts are handsome as his face,  
What matter if Christ be in the place?

So he makes merry and has good cheer,  
For Christmas comes but once a year;  
He scrapes his fiddle and beats his drum,  
And he'll bury the night ere morning come.

Of all the folk that night, I ween,  
Some were honest and some were mean;  
If all were honest, 'twas well for all,  
For Christ was sleeping in the stall.

But never may Englishmen so fare  
That they at Christmas should forbear—  
    To make them merry and have good cheer,  
    For Christmas comes but once a year ;  
    To scrape the fiddle and beat the drum,  
    And bury the night ere morning come.

GEOFFREY SMITH.



## THE CHRISTMAS OF THE SOUL

ALL after pleasures as I rid one day,  
My horse and I, both tired, body and mind,  
With full cry of affections, quite astray,  
I took up in the next inn I could find.

There, when I came, Whom found I but my dear,  
My dearest Lord; expecting till the grief  
Of pleasures brought me to Him; ready there  
To be all passengers' most sweet relief?

O Thou, Whose glorious yet contracted light,  
Wrapt in Night's mantle, stole into a manger;  
Since my dark soul and brutish, is Thy right—  
To man, of all beasts, be not Thou a stranger:

Furnish and deck my soul, that Thou may'st have  
A better lodging than a rack or grave.

GEORGE HERBERT.





## Christmas

ALL after pleasures as I rid one day,  
My horse and I both tired, body and  
mind,  
With full cry of affections quite astray,  
I took up in the next inn I could find.

There, when I came, Whom found I but my  
dear,  
My dearest Lord; expecting till the grief  
Of pleasures brought me to Him; ready there  
To be of all passengers' most sweet relief?

O Thou, Whose glorious, yet contracted, light,  
Wrapt in Night's mantle, stole into a  
manger;  
Since my dark soul and brutish—is Thy right,  
To Man, of all beasts, be not Thou a  
stranger:

Furnish and deck my soul, that Thou may'st  
have  
A better lodging than a rack or grave.



The shepherds sing ; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymn for Thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too : a flock it feeds  
Of thoughts and words and deeds.  
The pasture is Thy word, the streams Thy  
grace,  
Enriching every place.

Shepherds and flock shall sing, and all my  
powers  
Ousting the daylight hours.

Then we will chide the sun for letting night  
Take up his place and right:  
We sing one common Lord ; wherefore he  
should  
Himself the candle hold.

I will go searching till I find a sun  
Shall stay till we have done ;  
A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly  
As frost-nipt suns look sadly.  
Then we will sing and shine all our own day,  
And one another pay.





His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so  
twine,  
Till ev'n His beams sing and my music shine.

GEORGE HERBERT.

## Christ's Nativity

A WAKE, glad heart! get up and sing!  
It is the Birthday of thy King.

Awake! awake!

The sun doth shake

Light from his locks, and, all the way

Breathing perfumes, doth spice the day.

Awake! awake! hark how th' wood rings,  
Winds whisper, and the busy springs

A concert make!

Awake! awake!

Man is their high-priest, and should rise

To offer up the sacrifice.

I would I were a bird or star,  
Fluttering in woods, or lifted far

Above this inn

And road of sin!



Then either bird or star should be  
Shining or singing still to Thee.

I would I had in my best part  
Fit rooms for Thee! or that my heart  
Were so clean as  
Thy manger was!

But I am all filth, and obscene:  
Yet if thou wilt, Thou canst make clean.

Sweet Jesu! will then. Let no more  
This leper haunt and soil Thy door!  
Cure him, ease him,  
O release him!  
And let once more, by mystic birth,  
The Lord of life be born in earth.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

## The Nativity

PEACE! and to all the world! Sure One,  
And he the Prince of Peace, hath none!  
He travails to be born, and then  
Is born to travail more again.



Poor Galilee, thou canst not be  
The place for His nativity.  
His restless mother's called away,  
And not delivered till she pay.

A tax? 'Tis so still. We can see  
The Church thrive in her misery,  
And, like her head at Bethlehem, rise,  
When she, oppressed with troubles, lyes.  
Rise! Should all fail, we cannot be  
In more extremities than He.  
Great Type of passions! come what will,  
Thy grief exceeds all copies still;  
Thou cam'st from heaven to earth, that we  
Might go from earth to heaven with Thee;  
And though Thou found'st no welcome here,  
Thou didst provide no mansions there.  
A stable was Thy court, and when  
Men turned to beasts, beasts would be men;  
They were Thy courtiers; others none;  
And their poor manger was Thy throne.  
No swaddling silks Thy limbs did fold,  
Though Thou couldst turn Thy rags to gold.  
No rockers waited on Thy birth,  
No cradles stirred, nor songs of mirth;



But her chaste lap and sacred breast,  
Which lodged Thee first, did give Thee rest.

But stay! What light is that doth stream  
And drop here in a gilded beam?  
It is Thy star runs page, and brings  
Thy tributary Eastern Kings.  
Lord! grant some light to us, that we  
May find with them the way to Thee!  
Behold what mists eclipse the day!  
How dark it is! Shed down one ray  
To guide us out of this dark night,  
And say once more, "Let there be light!"

HENRY VAUGHAN.

(*"Thalia Rediviva."*)



## The Burning Babe

AS I in hoary winter's night stood shivering  
in the snow,  
Surprised I was with sudden heat which made  
my heart to glow;  
And lifting up a fearful eye to view what fire  
was near,  
A pretty Babe, all burning bright, did in the  
air appear,  
Who, scorched with exceeding heat, such  
floods of tears did shed,  
As though His floods should quench His flames  
with what His tears were fed.  
“Alas,” quoth He, “but newly born in fiery  
heats to fry,  
Yet none approach to warm their hearts or feel  
my fire but I.  
My faultless breast the furnace is, the fuel  
wounding thorns,  
Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, the ashes  
shame and scorns;



The fuel Justice layeth on, and Mercy blows  
the coals ;  
The metal in this furnace wrought are men's  
defilèd souls ;  
For which, as now on fire I am, to work them  
to their good,  
So will I melt into a bath, to wash them in my  
blood."

With this He vanished out of sight, and swiftly  
shrank away,  
And straight I callèd unto mind that it was  
Christmas Day.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL.

## Who Can Forget?

WHO can forget—never to be forgot—  
The time, that all the world in slumber  
lies,  
When, like the stars, the singing angels shot  
To earth, and heaven awakèd all his eyes  
To see another sun at midnight rise



On earth? Was never sight of pareil  
fame,  
For God before man like Himself did  
frame,  
But God Himself now like a mortal man be-  
came.

A Child He was, and had not learnt to speak,  
That with His word the world before did  
make ;  
His mother's arms Him bore, He was so weak,  
That with one hand the vaults of heaven could  
shake ;  
See how small room my infant Lord doth take,  
Whom all the world is not enough to  
hold !  
Who of His years or of His age hath  
told ?  
Never such age so young, never a child so old.

And yet but newly He was infanted,  
And yet already He was sought to die ;  
Yet scarcely born, already banished ;  
Not able yet to go, and forced to fly ;  
But scarcely fled away, when, by and by,



The tyrant's sword with blood is all  
defiled,  
And Rachel, for her sons with fury wild,  
Cries, "O thou cruel king, and O my sweetest  
child!"

Egypt His nurse became, where Nilus springs,  
Who, straight to entertain the rising sun,  
The hasty harvest in his bosom brings;  
But now for drought the fields were all un-  
done,  
And now with waters all is overrun;  
So fast the Cynthian mountains pour'd  
their snow,  
When once they felt the sun so near them  
glow,  
That Nilus Egypt lost, and to a sea did grow.

The angels carolled loud their song of peace,  
The cursèd oracles were stricken dumb;  
To see their Shepherd the poor shepherds  
press;  
To see their King the kingly sophies come;  
And them to guide unto his Master's home,





A star comes dancing up the orient,  
That springs for joy over the strawy tent,  
Where gold, to make their Prince a crown,  
they all present.

GILES FLETCHER.

## A Hymn of the Nativity

*Chorus.*

COME we shepherds whose blest sight  
Hath met Love's noon in Nature's  
night;

Come, lift we up our loftier song,  
And wake the sun that lies too long.

To all our world of well stol'n joy,  
He slept and dreamt of no such thing,  
While we found out heaven's fairer eye  
And kist the cradle of our King;  
Tell him he rises now too late  
To show us ought worth looking at.

Tell him we now can show him more  
Than e'er he showed to mortal sight,



Than he himself e'er saw before,  
Which to be seen needs not his light.  
Tell him, Thyrsis, where th' hast been,  
Tell him, Thyrsis, what th' hast seen.

*Tit.* Gloomy night embraced the place  
Where the noble Infant lay;  
The Babe looked up and showed His face—  
In spite of darkness it was day.  
It was Thy day, Sweet, and did rise,  
Not from the East, but from Thine eyes.

*Chorus.*—It was thy day, Sweet, etc.

*Thyrs.* Winter chid aloud, and sent  
The angry North to wage his wars,  
The North forgot his fierce intent,  
And left perfumes instead of scars;  
By those sweet eyes' persuasive powers,  
Where he meant frost he scattered flowers.

*Chorus.*—By those sweet eyes, etc.

*Both.* We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Bright dawn of our eternal day!  
We saw Thine eyes break from their East  
And chase the trembling shades away;



We saw Thee, and we blest the sight ;  
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

*Tit.* Poor world (said I), what wilt thou do  
To entertain this starry Stranger ?  
Is this the best thou canst bestow—  
A cold and not too cleanly manger ?  
Contend, ye powers of heaven and earth,  
To fit a bed for this huge birth.

*Chorus.*—Contend, ye powers, etc.

*Thyrs.* Proud world (said I), cease your  
contest,  
And let the mighty Babe alone ;  
The Phoenix builds the Phoenix' nest ;  
Love's architecture is all one.  
The Babe whose birth embraves this morn  
Made His own bed ere He was born.

*Chorus.*—The Babe whose birth, etc.

*Tit.* I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,  
Come hovering o'er the place's head,  
Offering their whitest sheets of snow  
To furnish the fair Infant's bed.



Forbear (said I), be not too bold;  
Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

*Chorus.*—Forbear (said I), etc.

*Thyrs.* I saw the obsequious seraphins  
Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,  
For well they now can spare their wings,  
Since heaven itself lies here below.  
Well done (said I), but are you sure  
Your down so warm will pass for pure?

*Chorus.*—Well done (said I), etc.

*Tit.* No, no, your King's not yet to seek  
Where to repose His royal head.  
See, see, how soon His new-bloom'd cheek  
'Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed.  
Sweet choice (said I), no way but so,  
Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow.

*Chorus.*—Sweet choice (said I), etc.

*Both.* We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Bright dawn of our eternal day!  
We saw Thine eyes break from their East  
And chase the trembling shades away;



We saw Thee, and we blest the sight,  
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

*Chorus.*—We saw Thee, etc.

*Full Chorus.*—Welcome all wonder in one  
sight,

Eternity shut in a span,  
Summer in winter, day in night,  
Heaven in earth and God in man!  
Great little One! whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth,

Welcome, though not to gold nor silk,  
To more than Cæsar's birthright is:  
Two sister seas of virgin milk,  
With many a rarely-tempered kiss,  
That breathes at once both maid and mother,  
Warms in the one and cools in the other.

She sings Thy tears asleep and dips  
Her kisses in Thy weeping eye;  
She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips  
That in their buds yet blushing lie;  
She 'gainst those mother-diamonds tries  
The points of her young eagle's eyes.



Welcome, though not to those gay flies  
Gilded i' the beams of earthly kings,  
Slippery souls in smiling eyes,  
But to poor shepherds' homespun things;  
Whose wealth's their flock, whose wit to be  
Well read in their simplicity.

Yet when young April's husband-showers  
Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,  
We'll bring the first-born of her flowers  
To kiss Thy feet and crown Thy head:  
To Thee, dread Lamb, whose love must keep  
The shepherds more than they their sheep.

To Thee, meek Majesty! soft King  
Of simple graces and sweet loves,  
Each of us his lamb will bring,  
Each his pair of silver doves,  
Till burnt at last in fire of Thy fair eyes,  
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice.

RICHARD CRASHAW.



## The Shepherds Went Their Hasty Way

THE shepherds went their hasty way,  
And found the lowly stable-shed  
Where the Virgin-Mother lay ;  
And now they checked their eager tread,  
For to the Babe that at her bosom clung,  
A mother's song the Virgin-Mother sung.

They told her how a glorious light,  
Streaming from a heavenly throng,  
Around them shone, suspending night !  
While sweeter than a mother's song,  
Blest angels heralded the Savior's birth,  
Glory to God on high ! and peace on earth !

She listened to the tale divine,  
And closer still the Babe she prest :  
And while she cried, "The Babe is mine !"  
The milk rushed faster to her breast :  
Joy rose within her like a summer's morn ;  
Peace, peace on earth ! the Prince of Peace is  
born.

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,  
Poor, simple, and of low estate !



That strife should vanish, battle cease,  
O why should this thy soul elate?  
Sweet music's loudest note, the poet's story,—  
Didst thou never love to hear of fame and  
glory?

And is not War a youthful king, '  
A stately hero clad in mail?  
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;  
Him earth's majestic monarchs hail  
Their friend, their playmate! and his bold,  
bright eye  
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

"Tell this in some more courtly scene,  
To maids and youths in robes of state!  
I am a woman poor and mean,  
And therefore is my soul elate:  
War is a ruffian all with guilt defiled,  
That from the agèd father tears his child.

"A murderous fiend by fiends adored,  
He kills the sire and starves the son;  
The husband kills, and from her board  
Steals all his widow's toil had won;





Plunders God's world of beauty ; rends away  
All safety from the night, all comfort from the  
day.

"Then widely is my soul elate,  
That strife should vanish, battle cease ;  
I'm poor and of a low estate,  
The Mother of the Prince of Peace,  
Joy rises in me, like a summer's morn :  
Peace, peace on earth ! the Prince of Peace is  
born !"

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

## The Mystic's Christmas

"**A**LL hail !" the bells of Christmas rang,  
"All hail !" the monks at Christmas  
sang,

The merry monks who kept with cheer  
The gladdest day of all their year.

But still apart, unmoved thereat,  
A pious elder brother sat  
Silent, in his accustomed place,  
With God's sweet peace upon his face.



“Why sitt’st thou thus?” his brethren cried.  
“It is the blessed Christmas-tide;  
The Christmas lights are all aglow,  
The sacred lilies bud and blow.

“Above our heads the joy-bells ring,  
Without the happy children sing,  
And all God’s creatures hail the morn  
On which the holy Christ was born!

“Rejoice with us; no more rebuke  
Our gladness with thy quiet look.”  
The gray monk answered: “Keep, I pray,  
Even as ye list, the Lord’s birthday.

“Let heathen Yule fires flicker red  
Where thronged refectory feasts are spread;  
With mystery-play and masque and mime  
And wait-songs speed the holy time!

“The blindest faith may haply save;  
The Lord accepts the things we have;  
And reverence, howsoe’er it strays,  
May find at last the shining ways.



"They needs must grope who cannot see,  
The blade before the ear must be ;  
As ye are feeling I have felt,  
And where ye dwell I too have dwelt.

"But now, beyond the things of sense,  
Beyond occasions and events,  
I know, through God's exceeding grace,  
Release from form and time and place.

"I listen, from no mortal tongue,  
To hear the song the angels sung ;  
And wait within myself to know  
The Christmas lilies bud and blow.

"The outward symbols disappear  
From him whose inward sight is clear ;  
And small must be the choice of days  
To him who fills them all with praise !

"Keep while you need it, brothers mine,  
With honest zeal your Christmas sign,  
But judge not him who every morn  
Feels in his heart the Lord Christ born !"

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.



## A Christmas Antiphone

THOU whose birth on earth  
Angels sang to men,  
While Thy stars made mirth,  
Savior, at Thy birth,  
This day born again.

As this night was bright  
With Thy cradle-ray,  
Very light of light,  
Turn the wild world's night  
To Thy perfect day.

God whose feet made sweet  
Those wild ways they trod,  
From thy fragrant feet,  
Staining field and street  
With the blood of God;

God whose breast is rest  
In time of strife,  
In Thy secret breast  
Sheltering souls opprest  
From the heat of life;



God whose eyes are skies,  
Love-lit as with spheres  
By the lights that rise  
To Thy watching eyes,  
Orbè lights of tears;

God whose heart hath part  
In all grief that is,  
Was not man's the dart  
That went through Thine heart,  
And the wound not his?

Where the pale souls wail,  
Held in bonds of death,  
Where all spirits quail,  
Came Thy Godhead pale  
Still from human breath—

Pale from life and strife,  
Wan with manhood, came  
Forth of mortal life,  
Pierced as with a knife,  
Scarred as with a flame.



Thou the Word and Lord  
In all time and space  
Heard, beheld, adored,  
With all ages poured  
Forth before Thy face.

Lord, what worth in earth  
Drew Thee down to die?  
What therein was worth,  
Lord, Thy death and birth?  
What beneath Thy sky?

Light above all love  
By Thy love was lit,  
And brought down the Dove,  
Feathered from above  
With the wings of it.

From the height of night,  
Was not Thine the star  
That led forth with might,  
By no worldly light,  
Wise men from afar?



Yet the wise men's eyes  
Saw Thee not more clear  
Than they saw Thee rise,  
Who in shepherd's guise  
Drew as poor men near.

Yet thy poor endure,  
And are with us yet;  
Be Thy name a sure  
Refuge for Thy poor  
Whom men's eyes forget.

Thou whose ways we praise,  
Clear alike and dark,  
Keep our works and ways,  
This, and all Thy days,  
Safe inside Thine ark.

Who shall keep Thy sheep,  
Lord, and lose not one?  
Who, save one, shall keep,  
Lest the shepherds sleep?  
Who beside the Son?



From the grave-deep wave,  
From the sword and flame,  
Thou, even Thou, shall save  
Souls of king and slave  
Only by Thy Name.

Light not born with morn,  
Or her fires above,  
Jesus, virgin-born,  
Held of men in scorn,  
Turn their scorn to love.

Thou whose face gives grace  
As the sun's doth heat,  
Let Thy sunbright face  
Lighten time and space  
Here beneath Thy feet.

Bid our peace increase,  
Thou that madest morn;  
Bid oppressions cease,  
Bid the night be peace,  
Bid the day be born.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.





## A Hope Carol

A NIGHT was near, a day was near ;  
Between a day and night  
I heard sweet voices calling clear,  
    Calling me ;  
I heard a whirr of wing on wing,  
    But could not see the sight ;  
I long to see the birds that sing,  
    I long to see.

Below the stars, beyond the moon,  
    Between the night and day,  
I heard a rising, falling tune  
    Calling me ;  
I long to see the pipes and strings  
    Whereon such minstrels play ;  
I long to see each face that sings,  
    I long to see.

To-day, or maybe not to-day,  
    To-night or not to-night,  
All voices that command or pray,  
    Calling me,



Shall kindle in my soul such fire,  
And in my eyes such light,  
That I shall see that heart's desire  
I long to see.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## Christmas Eve at St. Kavin's

TO the assembled folk  
At Great S. Kavin's spoke  
Young Brother Amiel on Christmas Eve:  
I give you joy, my friends,  
That as the round year ends  
We meet once more for gladness by God's  
leave.

On other festal days,  
For penitence or praise  
Or prayer we meet, or fullness of thanksgiving;  
To-night we calendar  
The rising of that star  
Which lit the old world with new joy of living.



Ah, we disparage still  
The Tidings of Good-will,  
Discrediting Love's gospel now as then!  
And with the verbal creed  
That God is love indeed,  
Who dares make Love his god before all men?

Shall we not, therefore, friends,  
Resolve to make amends  
To that glad inspiration of the heart;  
To grudge not, to cast out  
Selfishness, malice, doubt,  
Anger and fear; and for the better part,

To love so much, so well,  
The spirit cannot tell  
The range and sweep of her own boundary?  
There is no period  
Between the soul and God:  
Love is the tide, God the eternal sea.

\* \* \* \* \*

To-day we walk by love;  
To strive is not enough,  
Save against greed and ignorance and might.



We apprehend peace comes  
Not with the roll of drums,  
But in the still processions of the night.

And we perceive, not awe  
But love is the great law  
That binds the world together safe and whole.  
The splendid planets run  
Their courses in the sun;  
Love is the gravitation of the soul.

\* \* \* \* \*

Love only, one or all!  
Measure no great and small!  
Love is a seed, life-bearing, undecayed;  
And that immortal germ  
Past bounds of zone and term  
Will grow, and cover the whole world with  
shade.

Sow love; it cannot fail.  
Adversity's sharp hail  
May cut all else to ground; fair love survives.  
The black frost of despair  
And slander's bitter air—  
Love will outlast them by a thousand lives.



Be body, mind and soul  
Subject to love's control,  
Each loving to the limit of love's power ;  
And all as one, not three,  
So is man's trinity  
Enhanced and freed and gladdened hour by  
hour.

Beauty from youth to age,  
The body's heritage,  
Love will not forfeit by neglect nor shame ;  
And knowledge, dearly bought,  
Love will account as naught,  
Unless it serve soul's need and body's claim.

Let soul desire, mind ask,  
And body crave ; our task  
Be to fulfil each want in love's own way.  
So shall the good and true  
Partake of beauty, too,  
And life be helped and greatened day by day.

Spend love, and save it not ;  
In act, in wish, in thought,  
Spend love upon this lifetime without stint.



Let not the heart grow dry,  
As the good hours go by;  
Love now, see earth take on the glory tint.

Open the door to-night  
Within your heart, and light  
The lantern of love, there to shine afar;  
On a tumultuous sea  
Some straining craft, maybe,  
With bearings lost, shall sight love's silver star.

BLISS CARMAN.

## A Meditation for Christmas Day

CONSIDER, O my soul, what morn is this!  
Whereon the eternal Lord of all things  
made

For us, poor mortals, and our endless bliss,  
Came down from heaven; and, in a manger  
laid,

The first, rich offerings of our ransom paid.  
Consider, O my soul, what morn is this!

Consider what estate of fearful woe  
Had then been ours had He refused this  
birth;



From sin to sin tossed vainly to and fro,  
Hell's playthings, o'er a doomed and helpless  
earth!

Had He from us withheld His priceless  
worth,  
Consider man's estate of fearful woe!

Consider to what joys He bids thee rise,  
Who comes, Himself, life's bitter cup to  
drain!

Ah! look on this sweet Child, whose innocent  
eyes,

Ere all be done, shall close in mortal pain,  
That thou at last Love's Kingdom may'st  
attain:

Consider to what joys He bids thee rise!

Consider all this wonder, O my soul:

And in thine inmost shrine make music  
sweet!

Yea, let the world, from furthest pole to pole,  
Join in thy praises this dread birth to greet!

Kneeling to kiss thy Savior's infant feet!

Consider all this wonder, O my soul!

SELWYN IMAGE.



## A Morning Song for Christmas Day

(*For Music.*)

1. Wake, what unusual light doth greet  
The early dusk of this our street?

2. It is the Lord! it is the Christ!  
That hath the will of God sufficed;  
That, ere the day is born anew,  
Himself is born a Child for you.

### *Chorus.*

The harp, the viol, and the lute,  
To strike a praise unto our God!  
Bring here the reeds! bring here the flute!  
Wake summer from the winter's sod!  
Oh, what a feast of feasts is given  
To His poor servants by the King of  
Heaven!

3. Where is the Lord?

2. Here is the Lord,  
At thine own door. 'Tis He, the Word;  
He at whose face the eternal speed  
Of orb on orb was changed to song.





Shall He the sound of viols heed  
Whose ears have heard so high a throng?  
Shall He regard the citherns strung  
To whom the morning stars have sung?

*Chorus.*

Then wake, my heart, and sweep the  
strings,  
The seven in the Lyre of Life!  
Instead of lutes, the spirit sings;  
With praise its quiet house is rife!  
Oh, what a feast of feasts is given  
To His poor servants by the King of  
Heaven!

4. Who is the Lord?

2. He is the Lord,  
That Light of light, that Chief of all!

3. Who is the Lord?

2. He is the Lord,  
An outcast lying in a stall;  
For in the inn no room is left,  
While the unworthy feast instead,  
He of all welcome is bereft,  
And hath not where to lay his head.



1. What fitter place could I prepare,  
What better cradle, say, is there  
Than this, my heart, if that were fair?
2. Thou hast divined! A nobler part  
In man or angel, or of earth, or skies,  
There is not, than a broken heart;  
The which thy God may ne'er despise.

THE HYMN.

*Chorus.*

Lord, in my heart a little child,  
Now that the snows beat far and wide,  
While ever wails the tempest wild,  
Good Lord abide.  
Nor go Thou if the summer comes,  
Nor if the summer days depart;  
But chiefly make Thy home of homes,  
Lord, in my heart.

HERBERT P. HORNE.

## THE CHRISTMAS OF THE WANDERER

*For All Poor Souls.*

FOR all poor souls we'll strew the feast,  
With kindly heart and free;  
One Father owns us, and at least  
To-day we'll brothers be.  
Away with pride  
This holy tide,  
For it is Christmas morning!

So God bless us one and all,  
With hearts and hearthstones warm,  
And may He prosper great and small,  
And keep us out of harm;  
And teach us still  
His sweet good-will  
This merry Christmas morning.

EDWIN WAUGH.





## A Christmas Carol

I T chanced upon the merry, merry Christmas  
Eve

I went sighing past the church, across the  
moorland dreary,—

“Oh! never sin and want and woe this earth  
will leave,

And the bells but mock the wailing round they  
sing so cheery.

How long, O Lord! how long before Thou  
come again?

Still in cellar, and in garret, and on moor-  
land dreary,

The orphans moan, and widows weep, and  
poor men toil in vain,

Till earth is sick of hope deferred, though  
Christmas bells be cheery.”

Then arose a joyous clamor from the wildfowl  
on the mere,

Beneath the stars, across the snow, like clear  
bells ringing,

And a voice within cried, “Listen! Christmas  
carols even here!



Though thou be dumb, yet o'er their work  
the stars and snows are singing.  
Blind! I live, I love, I reign; and all the na-  
tions through  
With the thunder of My judgments even  
now are ringing.  
Do thou fulfil thy work but as yon wildfowl  
do,  
Thou wilt hear no less the wailing, yet hear  
through it angels singing.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

## Christmas Day—1868

HOW will it dawn, the coming Christmas  
Day?

A northern Christmas, such as painters love,  
And kinsfolk, shaking hands but once a year,  
And dames who tell old legends by the fire?  
Red sun, blue sky, white snow, and pearled  
ice,  
Keen, ringing air, which sets the blood on fire,  
And makes the old man merry with the young,



Through the short sunshine, through the  
longer night?

Or southern Christmas, dark and dank with  
mist,

And heavy with the scent of steaming leaves,  
And rosebuds mouldering on the dripping  
porch;

One twilight, without rise or set of sun,  
Till beetles drone along the hollow lane,  
And round the leafless hawthorns, flitting bats  
Hawk the pale moths of winter? Welcome,  
then,

At best, the flying gleam, the flying shower,  
The rain-pools glittering on the long white  
roads,

And shadows sweeping on from down to down  
Before the salt Atlantic gale: yet come  
In whatsoever garb, or gay or sad,  
Come fair, come foul, 'twill still be Christmas  
Day.

How will it dawn, the coming Christmas  
Day?

To sailors lounging on the lonely deck  
Beneath the rushing trade-wind? Or to him  
Who, by some noisome harbor of the East,



Watches swart arms roll down the precious  
bales,

Spoils of the tropic forests; year by year  
Amid the din of heathen voices groaning,  
Himself half heathen? How to those—brave  
hearts!—

Who toil with laden loins and sinking stride,  
Beside the bitter wells of treeless sands  
Toward the peaks which flood the ancient Nile,  
To free a tyrant's captives? How to those—  
New patriarchs of the new-found under-  
world—

Who stand, like Jacob, on the virgin lawns,  
And count their flocks' increase? To them  
that day

Shall dawn in glory and solstitial blaze  
Of full midsummer sun; to them that morn,  
Gay flowers beneath their feet, gay birds aloft,  
Shall tell of nought but summer: but to them,  
Ere yet, unwarned by carol or by chime,  
They spring into the saddle, thrills may come  
From that great heart of Christendom which  
beats

Round all the worlds; and gracious thoughts  
of youth;  
Of steadfast folk, who worship God at home;





Of wise words, learnt beside their mothers'  
knee ;  
Of innocent faces upturned once again,  
In awe and joy to listen to the tale  
Of God made man, and in a manger laid :  
May soften, purify, and raise the soul  
From selfish cares, and growing lust of gain,  
And phantoms of this dream which some call  
life,  
Toward the eternal facts ; for here or there,  
Summer or winter, 'twill be Christmas Day.

Blest day, which aye reminds us, year by  
year,  
What 'tis to be a man ; to curb and spurn  
The tyrant in us : that ignobler self  
Which boasts, not loathes, its likeness to the  
brute,  
And owns no good save ease, no ill save pain,  
No purpose, save its share in that wild war  
In which, through countless ages, living things  
Compete in internecine greed. Ah, God !  
Are we as creeping things, which have no  
Lord ?  
That we are brutes, great God, we know too  
well :



Apes, daintier-featured ; silly birds who flaunt  
Their plumes unheeding of the fowler's step ;  
Spiders, who catch with paper, not with webs ;  
Tigers, who slay with cannon and sharp steel,  
Instead of teeth and claws—all these we are.

Are we no more than these, and born but to  
    compete—

To envy and devour, like beast or herb ;  
Mere fools of nature ; puppets of strong lusts,  
Taking the sword, to perish with the sword  
Upon the universal battlefield,  
Even as the things upon the moor outside ?

    The heath eats up green grass and delicate  
    flowers,  
The pine eats up the heath, the grub the pine,  
The finch the grub, the hawk the silly finch ;  
And man, the mightiest of all beasts of prey,  
Eats what he lists : the strong eat up the weak,  
The many eat the few ; great nations, small ;  
And he who cometh in the name of all—  
He, greediest, triumphs by the greed of all ;  
And, armed by his own victims, eats up all :  
While ever out of the eternal heavens  
Looks patient down the great, magnanimous  
    God,



Who, Maker of all worlds, did sacrifice  
All to Himself! Nay, but Himself to one :  
Who taught mankind on that first Christmas  
Day

What 'twas to be a man ; to give, not take ;  
To serve, not rule ; to nourish, not devour ;  
To help, not crush ; if need, to die, not live.

Oh, blessed day, which giv'st the eternal lie  
To self, and sense, and all the brute within ;  
Oh, come to us, amid this war of life ;  
To hall and hovel, come ; to all who toil,  
In senate, shop, or study ; and to those  
Who, sundered by the wastes of half a world,  
Ill-warned, and sorely tempted, ever face  
Nature's brute powers, and men unmanned to  
brutes.

Come to them, blest and blessing, Christmas  
Day.

Tell them once more the tale of Bethlehem ;  
The kneeling shepherds, and the Babe Divine :  
And keep them men indeed, fair Christmas  
Day.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.



## A Christmas Carmen

### I.

SOUND over all waters, reach out from all  
lands,  
The chorus of voices, the clasping of hands ;  
Sing hymns that were sung by the stars of the  
morn,  
Sing songs of the angels when Jesus was born !  
With glad jubilations  
Bring hope to the nations !  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun :  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as  
one !

### II.

Sing the bridal of nations ! with chorals of  
love ;  
Sing out the war-vulture and sing in the dove,  
Till the hearts of the peoples keep time in  
accord,  
And the voice of the world is the voice of the  
Lord !



Clasp hands of the nations  
In strong gratulations :  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun ;  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as  
one !

III.

Blow, bugles of battle, the marches of peace ;  
East, west, north and south, let the long quar-  
rel cease :  
Sing the song of great joy that the angels  
began,  
Sing of glory to God and of good-will to man !  
Hark ! joining in chorus  
The heavens bend o'er us !  
The dark night is ending and dawn has begun ;  
Rise, hope of the ages, arise like the sun,  
All speech flow to music, all hearts beat as  
one !

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.



## The Star of Bethlehem

WHERE Time the measure of his hours  
By changeful bud and blossom keeps,  
And, like a young bride crowned with flowers,  
Fair Shiraz in her garden sleeps;

Where, to her poet's turban stone,  
The Spring her gift of flowers imparts,  
Less sweet than those his thoughts have sown  
In the warm soil of Persian hearts:

There sat the stranger, where the shade  
Of scattered date trees thinly lay,  
While in the hot, clear heaven delayed  
The long and still and weary day.

Strange trees and fruits above him hung,  
Strange odors filled the sultry air,  
Strange birds upon the branches swung,  
Strange insect voices murmured there.

And strange bright blossoms shone around,  
Turned sunward from the shadowy bowers,  
As if the Gheber's soul had found  
A fitting home in Iran's flowers.



Whate'er he saw, whate'er he heard,  
Awakened feelings new and sad:  
No Christian garb, nor Christian word,  
Nor church with Sabbath-bell chimes glad,

But Moslem graves, with turban stones,  
And mosque spires gleaming white, in view,  
And graybeard Mollahs in low tones  
Chanting their Koran service through.

The flowers which smiled on either hand,  
Like tempting fiends, were such as they  
Which once, o'er all that Eastern land,  
As gifts on demon altars lay.

As if the burning eye of Baal  
The servant of his Conquerer knew,  
From skies which knew no cloudy veil  
The Sun's hot glances smote him through.

"Ah me!" the lonely stranger said,  
"The hope which led my footsteps on,  
And light from heaven around them shed,  
O'er weary wave and waste, is gone!



“Where are the harvest fields all white,  
For Truth to thrust her sickle in?  
Where flock the souls, like doves in flight,  
From the dark hiding place of sin?

“A silent horror broods o’er all—  
The burden of a hateful spell—  
The very flowers around recall  
The hoary magi’s rites of hell!

“And what am I, o’er such a land  
The banner of the Cross to bear?  
Dear Lord, uphold me with Thy hand,  
Thy strength with human weakness share!”

He ceased, for at his very feet,  
In mild rebuke, a floweret smiled;  
How thrilled his sinking heart to greet  
The Star-flower of the Virgin’s child!

Sown by some wandering Frank, it drew  
Its life from alien air and earth,  
And told to Paynim sun and dew  
The story of the Savior’s birth.





From scorching beams, in kindly mood,  
The Persian plant its beauty screened,  
And on its pagan sisterhood,  
In love, the Christian floweret leaned.

With tears of joy the wanderer felt  
The darkness of his long despair  
Before that hallowed symbol melt,  
Which God's dear love had nurtured there.

From Nature's face that simple flower  
The lines of sin and sadness swept,  
And Magian pile and Paynim bower  
In peace like that of Eden slept.

Each Moslem tomb, and cypress old,  
Looked holy through the sunset air,  
And, angel-like, that Muezzin told  
From tower and mosque the hour of prayer.

With cheerful steps the morrow's dawn  
From Shiraz saw the stranger part,  
The Star-flower of the Virgin-born  
Still blooming in his hopeful heart!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.



## A Christmas Song

**B**LOW, wind, blow ;  
Sing through yard and shroud ;  
Pipe it shrilly and loud,  
Aloft as well as below ;  
Sing in my sailor's ear  
The song I sing to you,  
"Come home, my sailor true,  
For Christmas that comes so near."

Go, wind, go ;  
Hurry his home-bound sail,  
Through gusts that are edged with hail,  
Through winter, and sleet, and snow ;  
Song, in my sailor's ear,  
Your shrilling and moan shall be,  
For he knows they sing him to me  
And Christmas that comes so near.

WILLIAM COX BENNETT.



## A Christmas Carol

EVERYWHERE, everywhere, Christmas  
to-night!

Christmas in lands of the fir-tree and pine,  
Christmas in lands of the palm-tree and vine,  
Christmas where snow-peaks stand solemn and  
white,  
Christmas where corn fields lie sunny and  
bright.

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-  
night!

Christmas where children are hopeful and gay,  
Christmas where old men are patient and gray,  
Christmas where peace, like a dove in its flight,  
Broods o'er brave men in the thick of the fight.

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-  
night!

For the Christ-child who comes is the Master  
of all,  
No palace too great and no cottage too small;



The angels who welcome Him sing from the  
height,

“In the City of David a King in His might.”

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-  
night!

Then let every heart keep its Christmas within,  
Christ’s pity for sorrow, Christ’s hatred for  
sin,

Christ’s care for the weakest, Christ’s courage  
for right,

Christ’s dread of the darkness, Christ’s love of  
the light,

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-  
night!

So the stars of the midnight which compass us  
round

Shall see a strange glory, and hear a sweet  
sound,

And cry, “Look! the earth is aflame with de-  
light,

O sons of the morning, rejoice at the sight.”

Everywhere, everywhere, Christmas to-  
night!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.



## Outlanders, Whence Come Ye Last?

OUTLANDERS, whence come ye last?  
*The snow in the street and the wind on  
the door.*

Through what green seas and great have ye  
passed?

*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

From far away, O masters mine,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

We come to bear you goodly wine,  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

From far away we come to you,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

To tell of great tidings strange and true.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*



News, news of the Trinity,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

And Mary and Joseph from over the sea!  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

For as we wandered far and wide,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

What hap do ye deem there should us betide!  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

Under a tent, when the night was deep,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

There lay three shepherds, tending their sheep.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

“O ye shepherds, what have ye seen,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

To slay your sorrow and heal your teen?”  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*



“In an ox-stall this night we saw  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

A babe and a maid without a flaw.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

“There was an old man there beside,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

His hair was white and his hood was wide.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

“And as we gazed this thing upon,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

Those twain knelt down to the Little One.  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

“And a marvelous song we straight did hear,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

That slew our sorrow and healed our care.”  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*



News of a fair and a marvelous thing,  
*The snow in the street and the wind on the  
door.*

Nowell, nowell, nowell, we sing!  
*Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the  
floor.*

WILLIAM MORRIS.

## Christmas Eve

**A** LONE—with one fair star for company,  
The loveliest star among the hosts of  
night,

While the grey tide ebbs with the ebbing  
light—

I pace along the darkening wintry sea.

Now round the Yule-log and the glittering  
tree

Twinkling with festive tapers, eyes as bright  
Sparkle with Christmas joys and young de-  
light,

As each one gathers his family.





But I—a waif on earth where'er I roam—  
Uprooted with life's bleeding hopes and fears  
From that one heart that was my heart's sole  
home

Feel the old pang pierce through the severing  
years,

And as I think upon the years to come  
That fair star trembles through my falling  
tears.

MATHILDE BLIND.

## Christmas at Sea

THE sheets were frozen hard, and they cut  
the naked hand ;

The decks were like a slide, where a seaman  
scarce could stand ;

The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off  
the sea,

'And the cliffs and spouting breakers were the  
only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break  
of day ;



But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw  
how ill we lay.

We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with  
a shout,

And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by  
to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the  
South Head and the North ;

All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got  
no further forth ;

All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and  
dread,

For very life and nature we tacked from head  
to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the  
tide-race roared ;

But every tack we made we brought the North  
Head close aboard :

So's we saw cliffs and houses, and the breakers  
running high,

And the coastguard in his garden, with his  
glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as  
ocean foam ;



The good red fires were burning bright in  
every 'longshore home ;  
The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys  
volleyed out,  
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel  
went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a  
mighty jovial cheer ;  
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all  
days in the year)  
This day of our adversity was blessed Christ-  
mas morn,  
And the house above the coastguard's was the  
house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant  
faces there,  
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver  
hair ;  
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of  
homely elves,  
Go dancing round the china plates that stood  
upon the shelves.



And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that  
was of me,  
Of the shadow on the household and the son  
that went to sea ;  
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind  
of way,  
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessèd  
Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began  
to fall.

“All hands to loose topgallant sails,” I heard  
the captain call.

“By the Lord, she’ll never stand it,” our first  
mate, Jackson, cried. . . .

“It’s the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson,”  
he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails  
were new and good,

And the ship smelt up to windward just as  
though she understood.

As the winter’s day was ending, in the entry  
of the night,

We cleared the weary headland, and passed  
below the light.



And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul  
on board but me,  
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome  
to the sea ;  
But all that I could think of, in the darkness  
and the cold,  
Was just that I was leaving home and my  
folks were growing old.

R. L. STEVENSON.

## Christmas Carol

WHOSO hears a chiming for Christmas  
at the nighest,  
Hears a sound like Angels chanting in their  
glee,  
Hears a sound like palm-boughs waving in the  
highest,  
Hears a sound like ripple of a crystal sea.  
Sweeter than a prayer-bell for a saint in dying,  
Sweeter than a death-bell for a saint at rest,



Music struck in Heaven with earth's faint re-  
plying,  
"Life is good, and death is good, for Christ  
is Best."

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## Christmas in India

DIM dawn behind the tamarisks—the sky  
is saffron-yellow—

As the women in the village grind the corn,  
And the parrots seek the river-side, each call-  
ing to his fellow

That the Day, the staring Eastern Day, is  
born.

O the white dust on the highway!

O the stench in the byway!

O the clammy fog that hovers over earth!

And at Home they're making merry

'Neath the white and scarlet berry—

What part have India's exiles in their  
mirth?

Full day behind the tamarisks—the sky is blue  
and staring,

As the cattle crawl afield beneath the yoke,  
And they bear One o'er the field-path who is  
past all hope or caring,  
To that ghât beow the curling wreaths of  
smoke.

Call on Rama, going slowly,  
As ye bear a brother lowly—  
Call on Rama—he may hear, perhaps,  
your voice!

With our hymn-books and our psalters  
We appeal to other altars,  
And to-day we bid “good Christian men  
rejoice!”

High noon behind the tamarisks—the sun is  
hot above us,

As at Home the Christmas Day is breaking  
wan.

They will drink our healths at dinner—those  
who tell us how they love us,

And forget us till another year be gone!

O the toil that knows no breaking!

O the *Heimweh*, ceaseless aching!



O the black dividing Sea and alien Plain!  
Youth was cheap—wherefore we sold it;  
Gold was good—we hoped to hold it;  
And to-day we know the fulness of our gain.

Gray dusk behind the tamarisks—the parrots  
fly together—  
As the sun is sinking slowly over Home;  
And his last ray seems to mock us shackled  
in a lifelong tether  
That drags us back howe'er so far we roam.

Hard her service, poor her payment—  
She in ancient, tattered raiment—  
India, she the grim Stepmother of our kind.  
If a year of life be lent her,  
If her temple's shrine we enter,  
The door is shut—we may not look behind.

Black night behind the tamarisks—the owls  
begin their chorus—  
As the conches from the temple scream and  
bray.  
With the fruitless years behind us, and the  
hopeless years before us,  
Let us honor, O my brothers, Christmas  
Day!





Call a truce, then, to our labors,  
Let us feast with friends and neighbors;  
And be merry as the custom of our caste;  
For if "faint and forced the laughter,"  
And if sadness follow after,  
We are richer by one mocking Christmas  
past.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

## At Christmas

(WRITTEN IN SOUTH AFRICA.)

STREW our green earth—flowers! Our  
blue skies—incense  
Mount in wreath and spray!  
Set the Figures Three within the Rock-Cave  
All a Christmas Day!  
And it's O to dream of Essex gables under  
snow clouds gray—  
And it's Ah to wake and know them years and  
years away!



Dark babe-burthened mothers, hail the Mother,  
Fair as England's May!  
Let us back again to where we once clung  
On a Christmas Day!  
And it's O to dream those same mothers on  
whose breasts we lay—  
And it's Ah to wake and know them half the  
earth away!

Small brown goatherds, dance and sing to  
Jesus  
On His bed of hay!  
You to-day He heeds, as once He heeded  
Me on Christmas Day!  
And it's O to dream of things we once saw,  
ere we said God "Nay!"  
And it's Ah to wake and know them half a  
life away!

Poor-men brothers, up and hie to Joseph—  
By the Crib to pray!  
Gentler hearts and sterner wills we'll ask for  
On our Christmas Day!

And it's O to guess what man I might be,  
would I but obey!  
Is it I that heed at last the Bidding? Wend at  
last the Way?

ARTHUR SHEARLY CRIPPS.



## THE CHRISTMAS OF RELIGION

OUT of the Shadow of the Night  
I come, led by the starshine bright,  
With broken heart to bring to Thee  
The fruit of Thine Epiphany,  
The gift my fellows send by me,  
The myrrh to bed Thine agony,  
I set it here beneath Thy feet,  
In token of Death's great defeat;  
And hail Thee Conqueror in the strife,  
And hail Thee Lord of Light and Life.

All hail! All hail the Virgin Son!  
All hail! Thou little helpless One!  
All hail! Thou King upon the Tree!  
All hail! The Babe on Mary's Knee,  
The center of all mystery!

MICHAEL FAIRLESS.





## The Nativity

I SING the Birth was born to-night,  
The Author both of life and light;  
The angels so did sound it;  
And like the ravish'd shepherds said,  
Who saw the light, and were afraid,  
Yet search'd, and true they found it.

The Son of God, the eternal King,  
That did us all salvation bring,  
And freed the soul from danger;  
He whom the whole world could not take,  
The Word, which heaven and earth did make,  
Was now laid in a manger.

What comfort by Him do we win,  
Who made Himself the price of sin,  
To make us heirs of glory!  
To see this Babe, all innocence,  
A martyr born in our defense—  
Can man forget this story?

BEN JONSON.



## Of The Nativity of Christ

**R**ORATE *Cæli desuper!*

Heavens distill your balmy showers,  
For now is risen the bright daystar  
From the Rose Mary, flower of flowers :  
The clear sun, whom no cloud devours,  
Surmounting Phœbus in the east,  
Is comen of his heavenly towers ;  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Archangels, angels, dominations,  
Thrones, potentates, and martyrs seir,<sup>1</sup>  
And all the heavenly operations,  
Star, planet, firmament and sphere,  
Fire, earth, air, and water clear,  
To Him give loving, most and least,  
That come is in so meek maner ;  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Sinners be glad, and penance do,  
And thank your Maker heartily,  
For He, that ye might not come to,  
To you is comen full humbly,

---

<sup>1</sup> Mary.





Your soulës with His blood to buy,  
And loose you of the fiend's arrest,  
And only of His own mercy;  
*Pro nobis Puer natus est.*

Celestial fowlës in the air,  
Sing with your notes upon hight,  
In firthës and forests fair.  
Be mirthful now, at all your might,  
For passed is your dully night;  
Aurora has the cloudis perced,  
The sun is risen with gladsome light,  
*Et nobis Puer natus est.*

Now spring up flowrës from the root,  
Revert you upward naturally,  
In honor of the blessed fruit  
That rose up from the Rose Mary;  
Lay out your leavës lustily,  
From dead take life now, at the least,  
In worship of that Prince worthy,  
*Qui nobis Puer natus est.*

Sing heaven imperial, most of height,  
Regions of air make harmony;  
All fish in floud, and fowl of flight,  
Be mirthful and make melody;



All Gloria in Excelsis cry,  
Heaven, earth, sea, man, bird and beast,  
He that is crowned above the sky.  
*Pro nobis Puer natus est.*

WILLIAM DUNBAR.

## Christ's Nativity

HOW gladdeth every living créature,  
With bliss and comfortable gladnéss,  
The heaven's King is clad in our natúre,  
Us from the death with ransom to redress;  
The lamp of joy, that chases all darkness,  
Ascended is to be the world's light,  
From every bale our boundés for to bliss,  
Born of the glorious Virgin Mary bright.

Above the radiant heaven ethereal,  
The Court of Stars, the course of sun and  
moon,  
The potent Prince of Joy Imperial,  
The high surmounting European abone,



Is coming from His mighty Father's throne  
In earth, with an inestimable light,  
And praised of angels with a sweet intone;  
Born of the glorious Virgin Mary bright.

Who ever in earth heard so blythe a story,  
Or tidings of so great felicity?  
As how the garthé of all grace and glory,  
For love and mercy hath ta'en humanity;  
Maker of angels, man, earth, heaven and sea,  
And t' overcome our foe, and put to flight,  
Is coming a babe, full of benignity,  
Born of the glorious Virgin Mary bright.

The sovereign senior of all celsitude,  
That sits above the order'd Cherabin,  
Which all things creat, and all things does in-  
clude,  
That never end shall, never did begin,  
But Whom is naught, from Whom no time  
does rin,  
With whom all good is, with Whom is every  
wight,  
Is with His wounds come for to wash our sin;  
Born of the most chaste Virgin Mary bright.

WILLIAM DUNBAR.



## On the Morning of Christ's Nativity

THIS is the Month, and this the happy  
morn

Wherein the Son of Heav'n's eternal King,  
Of wedded Maid, and Virgin Mother born,  
Our great redemption from above did bring;  
For so the holy sages once did sing,

That He our deadly forfeit should release,  
And with His Father work us a perpetual  
peace.

That glorious Form, that Light unsufferable,  
And that far-beaming blaze of Majesty,  
Wherewith he wont at Heav'n's high Council  
Table,

To sit the midst of Trinal Unity;  
He laid aside, and here with us to be

Forsook the Courts of everlasting Day,  
And chose with us a darksome House of mortal  
Clay.

Say, Heav'nly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein  
Afford a present to the Infant God?  
Hast thou no vers, no hymn, or solemn strein,



To welcome Him to this His new abode,  
Now while the Heav'n by the Suns team  
untrod,

Hath took no print of the approaching light,  
And all the spangled host keep watch in squad-  
rons bright?

See how from far upon the Eastern rode  
The Star-led Wisards haste with odours sweet,  
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,  
And lay it lowly down at His blessèd feet ;  
Have thou the honour first, thy Lord to greet,  
And joyn thy voice unto the Angel Quire,  
From out His secret Atar toucht with hallow'd  
fire.

*THE HYMN*

I.

**I**T was the winter wild,  
While the heaven-born child,  
All meanly wrapt, in the crude manger lies ;  
Nature in awe to Him  
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,  
With her great Master so to sympathize ;  
It was no season then for her  
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.



## II.

Only with speeches fair  
She wooes the gentle air,  
    To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,  
And on her naked shame,  
Pollute with sinful blame,  
    The saintly veil of maiden white to throw ;  
Confounded that her Maker's eyes  
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

## III.

But He, her fears to cease,  
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace ;  
    She, crowned with olive green, came softly  
        sliding  
Down through the turning sphere,  
His ready harbinger,  
    With turtle wing the amorous clouds divid-  
        ing ;  
And waving wide her myrtle wand,  
She strikes a universal peace through sea and  
    land.

## IV.

No war, or battle's sound,  
Was heard the world around ;



The idle spear and shield were high uphung,  
The hooked chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood,

The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,  
And kings sat still, with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord  
was by.

## V.

But peaceful was the night  
Wherein the Prince of light

His reign of peace upon the earth began :  
The winds, with wonder whist,  
Smoothly the waters kist,

Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,  
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,  
While birds of calm sit brooding on the  
charmed wave.

## VI.

The stars, with deep amaze,  
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,

Bending one way their precious influence,  
And will not take their flight,  
For all the morning light,

Or Lucifer, that often warned them thence ;



But in their glimmering orbs did glow  
Until their Lord Himself bespake, and bade  
          them go.

## VII.

And though the shady gloom  
Had given day her room,  
    The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,  
And hid his head for shame,  
As his inferior flame  
    The new enlightened world no more should  
        need ;  
He saw a greater sun appear  
Than his bright throne or burning axletree  
        could bear.

## VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,  
Or e'er the point of dawn,  
    Sat simply chatting in a rustic row ;  
Full little thought they then  
That the mighty Pan  
    Was kindly come to live with them below ;  
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,  
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy  
        keep.





## IX.

When such music sweet  
Their hearts and ears did greet,  
As never by mortal finger strook,  
Divinely-warbled voice  
Answering the stringed noise,  
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:  
The air, such pleasure loath to lose,  
With thousand echoes still prolongs each  
heavenly close.

## X.

Nature, that heard such sound,  
Beneath the hollow round  
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,  
Now was almost won  
To think her part was done,  
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling.  
She knew such harmony alone  
Could hold all heaven and earth in happier  
union.

## XI.

At last surrounds their sight  
A globe of circular light,



That with long beams the shamefaced night  
arrayed ;  
The helmed Cherubim,  
And sworded Seraphim,  
Are seen in glittering ranks, with wings displayed,  
Harping in loud and solemn quire,  
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

## XII.

Such music (as 'tis said)  
Before was never made,  
But when of old the sons of morning sung,  
While the Creator great  
His constellations set,  
And the well-balanced world on hinges hung,  
And cast the dark foundations deep,  
And bid the weltering waves their cozy channel keep.

## XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,  
Once bless our human ears,



If ye have power to touch our senses so ;  
And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time,  
And let the base of heaven's deep organ  
blow ;  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up full consort to the angelic symphony

## XIV.

For if such holy song  
Inwrap our fancy long,  
Time will run back, and fetch the age of  
gold ;  
And speckled Vanity  
Will sicken soon and die,  
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly  
mould ;  
And Hell itself will pass away,  
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peer-  
ing day.

## XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then  
Will down return to men,



Orbed in a rainbow ; and, like glories wear-  
ing,  
Mercy will sit between,  
Throned in celestial sheen,  
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down  
steering ;  
And heaven, as at some festival,  
Will open wide the gates of her high palace  
hall.

## XVI.

But wisest Fate says, No,  
This must not yet be so ;  
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,  
That on the bitter Cross  
Must redeem our loss,  
So both Himself and us to glorify ;  
Yet first to those ychained in sleep  
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder  
through the deep.

## XVII.

With such a horrid clang  
As on Mount Sinai rang,



While the red fire and smoldering clouds  
    outbrake,  
The aged earth, aghast  
With terror of that blast,  
    Shall from the surface to the centre shake,  
When, at the world's last session,  
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread  
    His throne.

## XVIII.

And then, at last, our bliss  
Full and perfect is,  
    But now begins; for, from this happy day,  
The old Dragon under ground,  
In straiter limits bound,  
    Not half so far casts his usurped sway;  
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,  
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

## XIX.

The oracles are dumb;  
No voice or hideous hum



Runs through the arched roof in words de-  
ceiving.  
Apollo, from his shrine,  
Can no more divine—  
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos  
leaving.  
No nightly trance or breathed spell  
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic  
cell.

## XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,  
And the resounding shore,  
A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament ;  
From haunted spring and dale,  
Edged with poplar pale,  
The parting Genius is with sighing sent ;  
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,  
The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled  
thickets mourn.

## XXI.

In consecrated earth,  
And on the holy hearth,



The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight  
    plaint ;  
In urns and altars round,  
A drear and dying sound  
    Affrights the Flamens at their service  
    quaint ;  
And the chill marble seems to sweat,  
While each peculiar Power foregoes his won-  
    ted seat.

## XXII.

Peor and Baalim  
Forsake their temples dim,  
    With that twice-battered god of Palestine ;  
And mooned Ashtaroth,  
Heaven's queen and mother both,  
    Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine ;  
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn ;  
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Tham-  
    muz mourn.

## XXIII.

And sullen Moloch, fled,  
Hath left in shadows dread



His burning idol, all of blackest hue ;  
In vain with cymbals' ring  
They call the grisly king,  
In dismal dance about the furnace blue :  
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,  
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

## XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen  
In Memphian grove or green,  
Trampling the unshowered grass with low-  
ings loud ;  
Nor can he be at rest  
Within his sacred chest ;  
Nought but profoundest hell can be his  
shroud ;  
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark  
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped  
ark.

## XXV.

He feels from Judah's land  
The dreaded Infant's hand ;



The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;  
Nor all the gods beside  
Longer dare abide;

Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:  
Our Babe, to show His Godhead true,  
Can in His swaddling bands control the  
damned crew.

## XXVI.

So when the sun, in bed,  
Curtained with cloudy red,  
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,  
The flocking shadows pale  
Troop to the infernal jail,  
Each fettered ghost slips to his several  
grave;  
And the yellow-skirted Fayses  
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-  
loved maze.

## XXVII.

But, see, the Virgin blest  
Hath laid her Babe to rest;



Time is our tedious song should here have  
ending ;  
Heaven's youngest-teemed star  
Hath fixed her polished car,  
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp at-  
tending ;  
And all about the courtly stable  
Bright-harnessed angels sit in order service-  
able.

JOHN MILTON.

## Of the Epiphany

FAIR Eastern Star, that art ordained to run  
Before the sages, to the rising sun,  
Here cease thy course, and wonder that the  
cloud  
Of this poor stable can thy Maker shroud :  
Ye heavenly bodies glory to be bright,  
And are esteemed as ye are rich in light,  
But here on earth is taught a different way,  
Since under this low roof the Highest lay.



Jerusalem erects her stately towers,  
Displays her windows and adorns her bowers ;  
Yet there thou must not cast a trembling  
    spark,  
Let Herod's palace still continue dark ;  
Each school and synagogue thy force repels,  
There Pride enthroned in misty error dwells ;  
The temple, where the priests maintain their  
    quire,  
Shall taste no beam of thy celestial fire,  
While this weak cottage all thy splendor takes :  
A joyful gate of every chink it makes.  
Here shines no golden roof, no ivory stair,  
No king exalted in a stately chair,  
Girt with attendants, or by heralds styled,  
But straw and hay enwrap a speechless Child.  
Yet Sabæ's lords before this Babe unfold  
Their treasures, offering incense, myrrh and  
    gold.

The crib becomes an altar ; therefore dies  
No ox nor sheep ; for in their fodder lies  
The Prince of Peace, who, thankful for His  
    bed,  
Destroys those rites in which their blood was  
    shed :



The quintessence of earth He takes, and fees,  
And precious gums distilled from weeping  
trees;

Rich metals and sweet odors now declare  
The glorious blessings which His laws prepare,  
To clear us from the base and loathsome flood  
Of sense, and make us fit for angels' food,  
Who lift to God for us the holy smoke  
Of fervent prayers with which we Him invoke,  
And try our actions in the searching fire,  
By which the seraphims our lips inspire:  
No muddy dross pure minerals shall infect,  
We shall exhale our vapors up direct;  
No storm shall cross, nor glittering lights de-  
face

Perpetual sighs which seek a happy place.

SIR JOHN BEAUMONT.

## And They Laid Him in a Manger

HAPPY crib, that wert alone  
To my God, bed, cradle, throne!  
Whilst thy glorious vileness I  
View with divine fancy's eye,



Sordid filth seems all the cost,  
State, and splendor, crowns do boast.  
See heaven's sacred majesty  
Humbled beneath poverty;  
Swaddled up in homely rags,  
On a bed of straw and flags!  
He whose hands the heavens display'd,  
And the world's foundations laid,  
From the world almost exiled,  
Of all ornaments despoil'd.  
Perfumes bathe Him not, new-born,  
Persian mantles not adorn;  
Nor do the rich roofs look bright,  
With the jasper's orient light.  
Where, O royal Infant, be  
Th' ensigns of Thy majesty;  
Thy Sire's equalizing state;  
And Thy sceptre that rules fate?  
Where's Thy angel-guarded throne,  
Whence Thy laws Thou didst make known—  
Laws which heaven, earth, hell obey'd?  
These, ah! these aside He laid;  
Would the emblem be—of pride  
By humility outvied?

SIR EDWARD SHERBURNE.



## An Ode to the Birth of Our Savior

I N Numbers, and but these few,  
I sing Thy Birth, O Jesu!  
Thou prettie Babie, born here,  
With sup'rabundant scorn here:  
Who for Thy Princely Port here,  
Hadst for Thy place  
Of Birth a base  
Out-stable for Thy Court here.

Instead of neat Inclosures  
Of interwoven Osiers;  
Instead of fragrant Posies  
Of Daffodils, and Rosies;  
Thy cradle, Kingly Stranger,  
As Gospel tells,  
Was nothing els,  
But, here, a homely manger.

But we with Silks (not Crewels),  
With sundry precious Jewels,  
And Lily-work will dresse Thee;  
And as we dispossess Thee



Of clouts wee'l make a chamber,  
Sweet Babe, for Thee,  
Of Ivorie,  
And plaister'd round with Amber.

The Jewes they did disdaine Thee,  
But we will entertaine Thee.  
With Glories to await here  
Upon Thy Princely State here,  
And more for love, then pittie.  
From yeere to yeere  
Wee'l make Thee, here,  
A Free-born of our Citie.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"His Noble Numbers."*)

## The Shepherd's Song

SWEET music, sweeter far  
Than any song is sweet:  
Sweet music, heavenly rare,  
Mine ears, O peers, doth greet.



You gentle flocks, whose fleeces pearled with  
dew,  
Resemble heaven, whom golden drops make  
bright,  
Listen, Oh, listen, now, Oh, not to you  
Our pipes make sport to shorten weary  
night:  
But voices most divine  
Make blissful harmony;  
Voices that seem to shine,  
For what else clears the sky?  
Tunes can we hear, but not the singers see,  
The tunes divine, and so the singers be.

Lo, how the firmament  
Within an azure fold  
The flock of stars hath pent,  
That we might them behold!  
Yet from their beams proceedeth not this light,  
Nor can their crystals such reflection give.  
What, then, doth make the element so bright?  
The heavens are come down upon earth to  
live.  
But hearken to the song,  
Glory to glory's King,





And peace all men among,  
These quiristers do sing.  
Angels they are, as also (shepherds) He  
Whom in our fear we do admire to see.

Let not amazement blind  
Your souls, said He, annoy :  
To you and all mankind  
My message bringeth joy.  
For lo! the world's great Shepherd now is  
born,  
A blessed Babe, an Infant full of power :  
After long night uprisen in the morn,  
Renowning Bethlem in the Saviour.  
Sprung is the perfect day,  
By prophets seen afar ;  
Sprung is the mirthful May,  
Which winter cannot mar.  
In David's city doth this Sun appear  
Clouded in flesh, yet, shepherds, sit we here?

EDMUND BOLTON.



## The Shepherds

SWEET, harmless lives! [up]on whose  
holy leisure

Waits Innocence and pleasure—

Whose leaders to those pastures and clear  
springs

Were Patriarchs, Saints, and Kings:  
How happen'd it that in the dead of night

You, only, saw true light,

While Palestine was fast asleep, and lay

Without one thought of Day?

Was it because those first and blesséd swains

Were pilgrims on those plains

When they received the Promise, for which  
now

'Twas there first shown to you?

'Tis true He loves that dust whereon they go

That serve Him here below,

And therefore might, for memory of those,

His love there first disclose;

But wretched Salem, once His love, must  
now

No voice nor vision know:—



Her stately piles, with all their height and  
pride,

Now languishèd and died,  
And Bethlem's humble cots above them stept,  
While all her seers slept ;

Her cedar, fir, hew'd stones and gold, were all  
Polluted through their fall,

And those once sacred mansions were now  
Mere emptiness and show.

This made the Angel call at reeds and thatch :

Yet where the shepherds watch,  
And God's own lodging—though He could  
not lack—

To be a common rack,  
No costly pride, no soft-clothed luxury

In those thin cells could lie ;  
Each stirring wind and storm blew through  
their cots,

Which never harbor'd plots ;  
Only Content and Love and humble joys

Lived there without all noise ;  
Perhaps some harmless cares for the next day  
Did in their bosoms play,

As where to lead their sheep, what silent  
nook,

What springs or shades to look ;



But that was all: And now with gladsome  
care  
They for the town prepare;  
They leave their flock, and in a busy talk  
All toward Bethlem walk  
To see their souls' great Shepherd, Who was  
come  
To bring all stragglers home;  
Where now they find Him out, and, taught  
before,  
That Lamb of God adore—  
That Lamb Whose days great kings and  
prophets wish'd  
And long'd to see, but miss'd.  
The first light they beheld was bright and gay,  
And turn'd their night to day;—  
But to this later light they saw in Him  
Their day was dark and dim.

HENRY VAUGHAN.



## The True Christmas

SO, stick up ivie and the bays,  
And then restore the heathen ways.  
Green will remind you of the spring,  
Though this great day denies the thing;  
And mortifies the earth, and all  
But your wild revels, and loose hall.  
Could you wear flowers, and roses strow  
Blushing upon your breast's warm snow.  
That very dress your lightness will  
Rebuke, and wither at the will.  
The brightness of this day we owe  
Not unto music, masque nor showe;  
Nor gallant furniture, nor plate,  
But to the manger's mean estate.  
His life while here, as well as birth,  
Was but a check to pomp and mirth;  
And all man's greatness you may see  
Condemned by his humility.

Then leave your open house and noise,  
To welcome him with holy joys,  
And the poor shepherds' watchfulness;  
Whom light and hymns from heaven did  
bless.



What you abound with, cast abroad  
To those that want, and ease your load.  
Who empties thus will bring more in;  
But riot is both loss and sin.  
Dress finely what comes not in sight,  
And then you keep your Christmas right.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

(*"Thalia Rediviva."*)

## Gloria in Excelsis

AS on the night before the happy morn,  
A blessèd angel unto shepherds told  
Where (in a stable) He was poorly born,  
Whom nor the earth nor heaven of heavens  
can hold:  
Through Bethlehem rung  
This news at their return;  
Yea, angels sung  
That God with us was born;  
And they made mirth because we should not  
mourn.



Their angel carol sing we then,  
To God on high all glory be,  
For peace on earth bestoweth He,  
And sheweth favour unto men.

This favour Christ vouchsafèd for our sake;  
To buy us thrones, He in a manger lay;  
Our weaknes took, that we His strength might  
take;  
And was disrobed that He might us array;  
Our flesh He wore,  
Our sin to wear away;  
Our curse He bore,  
That we escape it may;  
And wept for us that we might sing for aye.  
With angels therefore, sing again,  
To God on high all glory be,  
For peace on earth bestoweth He,  
And sheweth favour unto men.

GEORGE WITHER.



## Psalm for Christmas Day

FAIREST of morning lights appear,  
Thou blest and gaudy day,  
On which was born our Saviour dear;  
Arise and come away!

This day prevents His day of doom;  
His mercy now is nigh;  
The mighty God of Love is come,  
The Dayspring from on high!

Behold the great Creator makes  
Himself an house of clay,  
A robe of Virgin-flesh He takes,  
Which He will wear for aye.

Hark! hark! the wise Eternal Word  
Like a weak infant cries:  
In form of servant is the Lord,  
And God in cradle lies.





This wonder struck the world amazed,  
It shook the starry frame ;  
Squadrons of Spirits stood and gazed,  
Then down in troops they came.

Glad Shepherds ran to view this sight :  
A choir of Angels sings ;  
And Eastern Sages with delight  
Adore this King of kings.

Join then, all hearts that are not stone,  
And all our voices prove,  
To celebrate this Holy One,  
The God of peace and love.

THOMAS PESTEL.

## At Bethlehem

COME, we shepherds, whose blest sight  
Hath met Love's noon in Nature's night ;  
Come, lift we up our loftier song,  
And wake the Sun, that lies too long.



Gloomy night embraced the place  
Where the noble Infant lay:  
The Babe look'd up, and show'd His face—  
In spite of darkness, it was day.  
It was Thy day, Sweet! and did rise  
Not from the East, but from Thine eyes.

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Young dawn of our eternal Day;  
We saw Thine eyes break from their East  
And chase the trembling shades away;  
We saw Thee (and we blest the sight),  
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

Welcome, all wonders in one sight!  
Eternity shut in a span!  
Summer in Winter! Day in Night!  
Heaven in Earth! and God in man!  
Great Little One, Whose all-embracing birth  
Lifts Earth to Heaven, stoops Heaven to  
Earth.

RICHARD CRASHAW.



## The Nativity

SHEPHERDS, rejoice, lift up your eyes,  
And send your fears away;  
News from the region of the skies!  
Salvation's born to-day.

"Jesus, the God whom Angels fear,  
Comes down to dwell with you;  
To-day He makes His entrance here,  
But not as monarchs do.

"No gold, nor purple swaddling-bands,  
Nor royal shining things;  
A manger for His cradle stands,  
And holds the King of kings.

"Go, shepherds, where the Infant lies,  
And see His humble throne:  
With tears of joy in all your eyes  
Go, shepherds, kiss the Son."

Thus Gabriel sang; and straight around  
The heavenly armies throng;  
They tune their harps to lofty sound,  
And thus conclude the song:



“Glory to God that reigns above,  
Let peace surround the Earth;  
Mortals shall know their Maker’s love  
At their Redeemer’s birth.”

Lord! and shall angels have their songs,  
And men no tunes to raise?  
O may we lose these useless tongues  
When they forget to praise!

Glory to God that reigns above,  
That pitied us, forlorn!  
We join to sing our Maker’s love—  
For there’s a Saviour born.

ISAAC WATTS.

## Christmas Eve

I T was the death-time of the year—  
Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*  
How chill, how keen the stars appear!  
The frost is on each gray grass-spear,  
And frozen white are river and mere.



All human folk are houséd warm—

Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*

With light and fire 'gainst night and storm.

And little children, safe from harm,

Each in its tender mother's arm.

Like the swan's plume the snows are spread—

Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*

With Christ's dear mother lacking bed.

All doors are shut against her need,

Except the humble cattle-shed.

Shake down the grass for her to lie—

Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*

And bid the quiet beasts draw nigh.

All Heaven shall now abase its eye,

Nor view the Birth so Heavenly.

Alone upon that holy ground—

Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*

The ass and oxen knelt in swoond.

While Bedlam lay in slumber bound,

The ass, the ox, were worthy found.



Before the Kings and Shepherds these—  
Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*  
And Powers and Principalities.  
With ass and oxen on their knees,  
He doth exalt all lowliness,

Oh, dull and sin-clogged hearts of men—  
Sing, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo!*  
With frost upon the window pane,  
God save ye, merry gentlemen:  
For Christ, Our Lord, is born again.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

## CHRISTMAS CAROLS

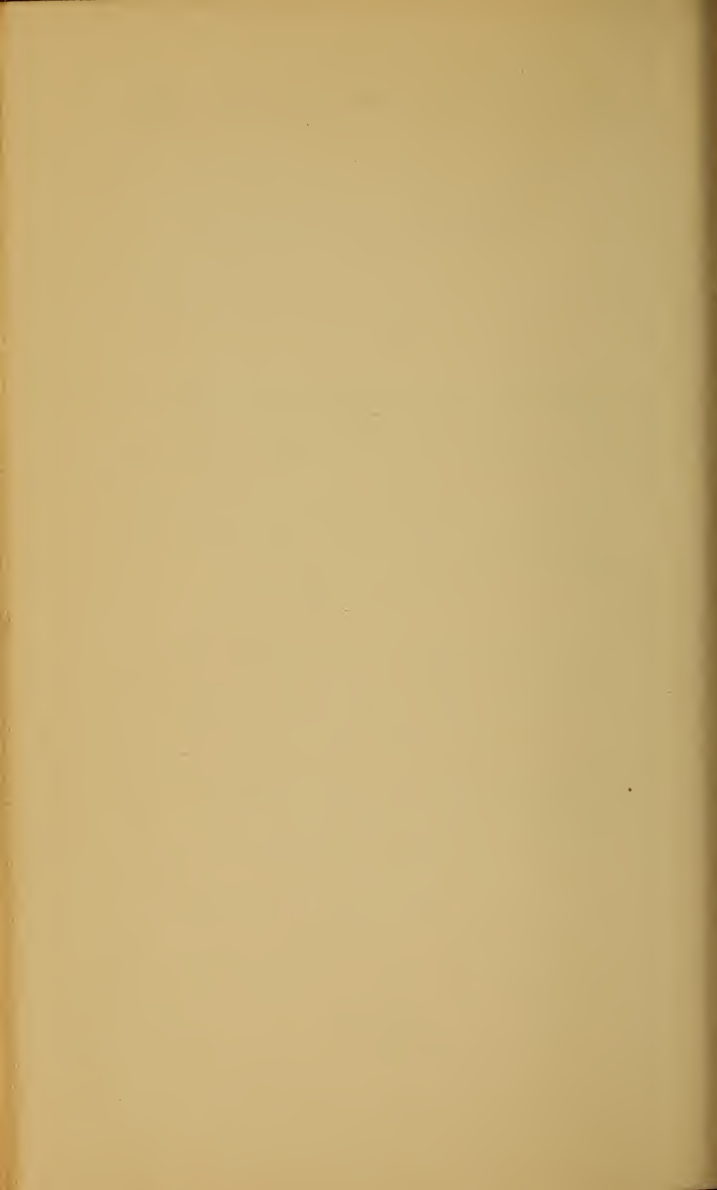
WHEN Christ was born of Mary free  
In Bethlehem in that fair citie,  
Angels sungen with mirth and glee,  
*In Excelsis Gloria!*

Herdsmen beheld these angels bright  
To them appeared with great light,  
And said, God's son is born this night,  
*In Excelsis Gloria!*

This King is comen to save kind  
[Even] in Scripture as we find,  
[There] fore this song have we in mind,  
*In Excelsis Gloria!*

[Then, dear] Lord, for Thy great grace  
[Grant us] in bliss to see Thy face,  
Where we may sing to Thee solace,  
*In Excelsis Gloria!*

*Harleian MS., A.D. 1500.*







## The First Nowell

THE first Nowell the Angel did say,  
Was to three poor shepherds in fields as  
they lay ;  
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep  
In a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.

They lookèd up and saw a star  
Shining in the East beyond them far,  
And to the earth it gave great light,  
And so it continued both day and night.  
Nowell, Nowell—

And by the light of that same star,  
Three Wise Men came from country far.  
To seek for a King was their intent,  
And to follow the star wherever it went.  
Nowell, Nowell—

The star drew night to the north-west,  
O'er Bethlehem it took rest,



And there it did both stop and stay  
Right over the place where Jesus lay.  
Nowell, Nowell—

Then did they know assuredly  
Within that house the King did lie;  
One entered in then for to see  
And found the babe in poverty.  
Nowell, Nowell—

Then entered in those Wise Men three  
Most reverently upon their knee,  
And offered there in His presence  
Both gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.  
Nowell, Nowell—

Between an ox stall and an ass,  
This child truly there born He was;  
For want of clothing they did Him lay  
In the manger, among the hay.  
Nowell, Nowell—

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
And with his blood mankind hath bought.  
Nowell, Nowell—



If we in our time shall do well,  
We shall be free from death and Hell,  
For God hath prepared for us all  
A resting-place in general.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
Born is the King of Israel.

*Old Carol*

## I Saw Three Ships Come Sailing In

I SAW three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
I saw three ships come sailing in  
On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
And what was in those ships all three  
On Christmas day in the morning?

Our Saviour Christ and his lady,  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
Our Saviour Christ and his lady,  
On Christmas day in the morning.



Pray whither sailed those ships all three  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
Pray whither sailed those ships all three  
On Christmas day in the morning?

O they sailed into Bethlehem  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
O they sailed into Bethlehem  
On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth shall ring  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
And all the bells on earth shall ring  
On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the angels in heaven shall sing  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
And all the angels in heaven shall sing  
On Christmas day in the morning.

And all the souls on earth shall sing  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
And all the souls on earth shall sing  
On Christmas day in the morning.



Then let us all rejoice amain  
On Christmas day, on Christmas day;  
Then let us all rejoice amain  
On Christmas day in the morning.

*Anonymous.*

## God Rest you, Merry Gentlemen

GOD rest you, merry gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born upon this day  
To save us all from Satan's power  
When we were gone astray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

In Bethlehem in Jewry  
This blessèd Babe was born,  
And laid within a manger  
Upon this blessèd morn;  
The which his mother Mary  
Nothing did take in scorn.



O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

From God our Heavenly Father  
A blessed angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same,  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by name.

O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

Fear not, then said the angel,  
Let nothing you affright,  
This day is born a Saviour  
Of virtue, power, and might;  
So frequently to vanquish all  
The friends of Satan quite.

O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

The Shepherds at those tidings  
Rejoiced much in mind,



And left their flocks a-feeding  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway,  
This blessed Babe to find.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

But when to Bethlehem they came,  
Whereat this infant lay,  
They found him in a manger  
Where oxen feed on hay;  
His mother Mary kneeling  
Unto the Lord did pray.  
O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas  
All others doth deface.



O tidings of comfort and joy,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day.

*Anonymous.*

## This Endris Night

THIS endris<sup>1</sup> night  
I saw a sight,  
A star as bright as day;  
And ever among  
A maiden sung,  
Lullay, byby, lullay.  
This lovely lady sat and sang, and to her childē  
said:  
“My son, my brother, my father dear, why liest  
thou thus in hayd?<sup>2</sup>  
My sweetē brid,<sup>3</sup>  
Thus it is betid  
Though thou be King veray;  
But, nevertheless,  
I will not cease  
To sing byby, lullay.”

---

1 last; 2 hay; 3 bird.





The child then spake ; in his talking he to his  
mother said :

“I bekid<sup>4</sup> am king, in crib though I be laid ;  
For angels bright  
Down to me light,  
Thou knowest it is no nay.  
And of that sight  
Thou mayest be light,  
To sing byby, lullay.”

“Now, sweet son, since thou art king, why art  
thou laid in stall?  
Why not thou ordain thy bedding in some  
great King’s hall?  
Methinketh it is right  
That king or knight  
Should be in good array ;  
And then among  
It were no wrong  
To sing byby, lullay.”

“Mary, mother, I am thy child, though I be  
laid in stall ;  
Lords and dukes shall worship me, and so shall  
kinges all.

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<sup>4</sup> known or signified.



Ye shall well see  
That kingēs three  
Shall come on the twelfth day;  
For this behest  
Give me thy breast,  
And sing byby, lullay.”

“Now tell me, sweet son, I thee pray, thou art  
my love and dear,  
How should I keep thee to thy pay,<sup>5</sup> and make  
thee glad of cheer?  
For all thy will  
I would fulfil,  
Thou weet’st full well in fay.<sup>6</sup>  
And for all this  
I will thee kiss,  
And sing byby, lullay.”

“My dear mother, when time it be, take thou  
me up aloft,  
And set me upon thy knee, and handle me full  
soft.  
And in thy arm  
Thou wilt me warm,

---

<sup>5</sup> content; <sup>6</sup> faith.



And keep night and day;  
If I weep,  
And may not sleep,  
Thou sing byby, lullay."

"Now, sweet son, since it is so, all things are  
at thy will,  
I pray thee grant to me a boon, if it be right  
and skill,  
That child or man,  
That will and can,  
Be merry upon my day;  
To bliss them bring,  
And I shall sing  
Lullay, byby, lullay."

*(Old Carol, reprinted from the Percy Society's  
text.)*

## To-day in Bethlehem

TO-DAY in Bethlehem hear I  
Sweet angel voices singing,  
All glory be to God on high,  
Who peace to earth is bringing.



The Virgin Mary holdeth more  
Than highest heaven most holy :  
Light shines on what was dark before,  
And lifteth up the lowly.

God wills that peace should be in earth,  
And holy exultation :  
Sweet Babe, I greet Thy spotless birth  
And wondrous Incarnation.  
To-day in Bethlehem hear I  
Even the lowly singing :  
With angel-words they pierce the sky ;  
All earth with joy is ringing.  
—From the Greek of *John of Damascus*  
by Philip Schaaf, D.D.

## The Cherry-Tree Carol

AS Joseph was a-walking,  
He heard an angel sing,  
“This night shall be the birth-time  
Of Christ, our heavenly King.”



He neither shall be born  
In housen nor in hall,  
Nor in the place of paradise,  
But in an ox's stall.

He neither shall be clothèd  
In purple nor in pall,  
But in the fair white linen  
That usen babies all.

He neither shall be rockèd  
In silver nor in gold,  
But in a wooden manger  
That resteth on the mould."

As Joseph was a-walking,  
There did an angel sing,  
And Mary's child at midnight  
Was born to be our King.

Then be ye glad, good people,  
This night of all the year,  
And light ye up your candles,  
For His star it shineth clear.

*Old English Carol.*



## The Golden Carol

[Of Melchior, Balthazar, and Gaspar, the  
Three Kings of Cologne.]

WE saw the light shine out a-far,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And straight we knew Christ's Star it was,  
Bright beaming in the morning.

Then did we fall on bended knee,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And prais'd the Lord, who'd let us see  
His glory at its drawing.

Oh! ever thought be of His Name,  
On Christmas in the morning,  
Who bore for us both grief and shame,  
Affection's sharpest scorning.

And may we die (when death shall come),  
On Christmas in the morning,  
And see in heav'n, our glorious home,  
The Star of Christmas morning.

*Old English Carol.*



## A Virgin Most Pure

A VIRGIN most pure, as the prophets do  
tell,

Hath brought forth a babe, as it hath her befell,  
To be our Redeemer from death, hell, and sin,  
Which Adam's transgression hath wrapt us all  
in.

Rejoice and be merry, set sorrow aside,  
Christ Jesus, our Saviour, was born at  
this tide.

In Bethlehem city, in Jewry it was,  
Where Joseph and Mary together did pass,  
And there to be taxed, with many one mo',  
For Cæsar commanded the same should be so.  
Rejoice and be merry—

But, when they had entered the city so fair,  
The number of people so mighty was there,  
That Joseph and Mary, whose substance was  
small,  
Could get in the city no lodging at all.  
Rejoice and be merry—



Then they were constrain'd in a stable to lie,  
Where oxen and asses they usèd to tie;  
Their lodging so simple, they held it no scorn,  
But against the next morning our Saviour was  
born.

Rejoice and be merry—

The King of all Glory to the world being  
brought,  
Small store of fine linen to wrap him was  
wrought;  
When Mary had swaddled her young son so  
sweet,  
Within an ox manger she laid him to sleep.

Rejoice and be merry—

Then God sent an angel from Heaven so high,  
To certain poor Shepherds in fields where they  
lie,  
And bid them no longer in sorrow to stay,  
Because that our Saviour was born on this  
day.

Rejoice and be merry—

Then presently after, the Shepherds did spy  
A number of Angels appear in the sky,





Who joyfully talked, and sweetly did sing,  
"To God be all Glory, our Heavenly King."  
Rejoice and be merry—

Three certain wise Princes, they thought it  
most meek  
To lay their rich off'rings at our Saviour's  
feet;  
Then the Shepherds consent, and to Bethlehem  
did go,  
And when they came thither they found it  
was so.  
Rejoice and be merry, set sorrow aside,  
Christ Jesus, our Saviour, was born at  
this tide.

*Old Carol.*



## A Christmas Carol

*Chorus:*

WHAT sweeter music can we bring,  
Than a Carroll for to sing  
The Birth of this our heavenly King?  
Awake the voice! awake the String!  
Heart, Ears, and Eye, and every thing  
Awake! the while the active Finger  
Runs division with the Singer.

*From the Flourish they came to the Song:*

1. Dark and dull night, flie hence away,  
And give the honour to this Day,  
That sees *December* turn'd to *May*.
2. If we may ask the reason, say;  
The why, and wherefore all things here  
Seem like the Springtime of the yeere?
3. Why do's the chilling Winters morne  
Smile, like a field beset with corne?  
Or smell, like to a meade new-shorne,  
Thus, on the sudden? 4. Come and see



The cause, why things thus fragrant be :  
'Tis He is borne, whose quick'ning Birth  
Gives Life and luster, publike mirth,  
To Heaven, and the under-Earth.

*Chorus:*

We see Him come, and know Him ours,  
*Who*, with His sunshine, and His showers,  
Turnes all the patient ground to flowers.

1. The Darling of the World is come,  
And fit it is, we find a roome  
To welcome Him. 2. The nobler part  
Of all the house here, is the heart.

*Chorus:*

Which we will give Him ; and bequeath  
'This Hollie, and this Ivie Wreath,  
To do Him honour ; Who's our King,  
And Lord of all this Revelling.

ROBERT HERRICK.  
(*"His Noble Numbers."*)



## A Christmas Carol

**I**T came upon the midnight clear,  
The glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on earth, good-will to men  
From heaven’s all-gracious King.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they came,  
With peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O’er all the weary world:  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o’er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

But with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;



And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love song which they bring:  
Oh, hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow,  
Look now, for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing:  
Oh, rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on  
By prophet bards foretold,  
When with the ever circling years  
Comes round the age of gold:  
When Peace shall over all the earth  
Its ancient splendors fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS.



## Christmas Carol

O'ER the world, in silence sleeping,  
Countless stars shone clear and bright;  
Lonely, silent vigil keeping,  
Shepherds watched their flocks by night.

Hour by hour the night was numbered,  
'Neath the distant Eastern skies;  
Hour by hour their charges slumbered,  
Guarded by their watchful eyes.

Suddenly the skies were rifted—  
Heaven's curtain rent in twain—  
On their startled gaze, uplifted,  
Burst the wondrous angel-train.

Sweeping downward through the arches  
Of the rent and cloven sky,  
Grandeur than the grandest marches  
Of earth's hosts, to victory;

Nobler than the greatest glory  
Annalled on the page of time,  
Sung in verse, or told in story,  
Came the angel host, sublime !

All the vault of heaven, ringing  
To the music of the sky ;  
Golden lyres, and angels singing :  
“Glory be to God on high !”

Voices that before creation  
Rang the anthems of His praise,  
Now, in endless adoration,  
Sang anew His wondrous grace :

Carolled forth the gracious story  
Of God’s love and pardon, then  
Sang : “To God on high be glory,  
Peace on earth, good-will to men !”

Golden lyres, by angel fingers  
Swept, rang forth the strain again ;  
Soft, angelic-sweet, it lingers—  
“Peace on earth, good-will to men !”

GEO. CHANNING THOMAS.



## Christmas Carol

O LOVELY voices of the sky,  
That hymned the Saviour's birth!  
Are ye not singing still on high,  
Ye that sang "Peace on Earth!"  
To us yet speak the strains  
Wherewith, in days gone by,  
Ye blessed the Syrian swains,  
O voices of the sky!

O clear and shining light! whose beams  
That hour heaven's glory shed  
Around the palms, and o'er the streams,  
And on the shepherd's head;  
Be near, through life and death,  
As in that holiest night,  
Of Hope, and Joy, and Faith,  
O clear and shining light!

O star! which led to Him whose love  
Brought down man's ransom free;  
Where art thou?—'midst the hosts above  
May we still gaze on thee?





In heaven thou art not set,  
Thy ways earth might not dim,  
Send them to guide us yet,  
O star which led to Him!

FELICIA HEMANS.

## A Christmas Carol

THE moon that now is shining  
In skies so blue and bright,  
Shone ages since on Shepherds  
Who watched their flocks by night.  
There was no sound upon the earth,  
The azure air was still,  
The sheep in quiet clusters lay  
Upon the grassy hill.

When lo! a white-winged Angel  
The watchers stood before,  
And told how Christ was born on earth  
For mortals to adore;  
He bade the trembling Shepherds  
Listen, nor be afraid,  
And told how in a manger  
The glorious Child was laid.



When suddenly in the Heavens  
    Appeared an Angel band—  
(The while in reverent wonder  
    The Syrian Shepherds stand),  
And all the bright host chanted  
    Words that shall never cease—  
Glory to God in the highest,  
    On earth good-will and peace!

The vision in the heavens  
    Faded, and all was still,  
And the wondering shepherds left **their** flocks  
    To feed upon the hill:  
Toward the blessed city  
    Quickly their course they held,  
And in a lowly stable  
    Virgin and Child beheld.

Beside a humble manger  
    Was the Maiden Mother mild,  
And in her arms her Son divine,  
    A newborn Infant, smiled.  
No shade of future sorrow  
    From Calvary then was cast,  
Only the glory was revealed,  
    The suffering was not past.



The Eastern kings before Him knelt,  
And rarest offerings brought;  
The shepherds worshipped and adored  
The wonders God had wrought:  
They saw the crown for Israel's King,  
The future's glorious part—  
But all these things the Mother kept  
And pondered in her heart.

Now we that Maiden Mother  
The Queen of Heaven call,  
And the Child we call our Jesus,  
Saviour and Judge of all—  
But the star that shone in Bethlehem  
Shines still, and shall not cease,  
And we listen still to the tidings  
Of Glory and of Peace.

ADELAIDE A. PROCTER.



## A Christmas Carol

I HEAR along our street  
Pass the minstrel throngs;  
Hark! they play so sweet  
On their hautboys, Christmas songs!  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.

In December ring  
Every day the chimes;  
Loud the gleemen sing  
In the streets their merry rhymes.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.

Shepherds at the grange,  
Where the Babe was born,  
Sang, with many a change,  
Christmas carols until morn.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.



These good people sang  
Songs devout and sweet;  
While the rafters rang,  
There they stood with freezing feet.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.

Nuns in frigid cells,  
At this holy tide,  
For want of something else,  
Christmas songs at times have tried.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.

Washerwomen old,  
To the sound they beat,  
Sing by rivers cold,  
With uncovered heads and feet.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire.



Who by the fireside stands,  
Stamps his feet and sings ;  
But he who blows his hands  
Not so gay a carol brings.  
Let us by the fire  
Ever higher  
Sing them till the night expire !

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

*(From The Noei Bourguignon De Gui  
Barôzai.)*

## Good King Wenceslas

GOOD King Wenceslas look'd out  
On the Feast of Stephen,  
When the snow lay round about,  
Deep and crisp, and even ;  
Brightly shone the moon that night,  
Though the frost was cruel,  
When a poor man came in sight,  
Gath'ring winter fuel.



“Hither, page, and stand by me,  
If thou know’st it, telling,  
Yonder’ peasant, who is he?  
Where and what his dwelling?”  
“Sire, he lives a good league hence,  
Underneath the mountain;  
Right against the forest fence,  
By Saint Agnes’ fountain.”

“Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,  
Bring me pine logs hither;  
Thou and I will see him dine,  
When we bear them thither.”  
Page and monarch forth they went,  
Forth they went together;  
Through the rude wind’s wild lament  
And the bitter weather.

“Sire, the night is darker now,  
And the wind blows stronger;  
Fails my heart, I know not how,  
I can go no longer.”  
“Mark my footsteps, my good page,  
Tread thou in them boldly;  
Thou shalt find the winter’s rage  
Freeze thy blood less coldly.”



In his master's steps he trod,  
Where the snow lay dinted;  
Heat was in the very sod  
Which the saint had printed.  
Therefore Christian men, be sure,  
Wealth or rank possessing,  
Ye who now will bless the poor,  
Shall yourselves find blessing.

REV. DR. NEALE.

## A Christmas Carol

**I**N the bleak midwinter  
Frosty winds made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron,  
Water like a stone;  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,  
Snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter  
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain;  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign:





In the bleak midwinter  
A stable-place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty  
Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim  
Worship night and day,  
A breastful of milk  
And a mangerful of hay ;  
Enough for Him, whom angels  
Fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel  
Which adore.

Angels and archangels  
May have gathered there,  
Cherubim and seraphim  
Thronged the air ;  
But only His mother,  
In her maiden bliss,  
Worshipped the Belovèd  
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,  
Poor as I am?



If I were a shepherd  
I would bring a lamb ;  
If I were a Wise Man  
I would do my part ;  
Yet what can I give Him—  
Give my heart.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## A Christmas Carol

L O! new-born Jesus,  
Soft and weak and small,  
Wrapped in baby's bands  
By His mother's hands,  
Lord God of all.

Lord God of Mary,  
Whom His lips caress  
While He rocks to rest  
On her milky breast  
In helplessness.



Lord God of shepherds  
Flocking through the cold,  
Flocking through the dark  
To the only Ark,  
The only Fold.

Lord God of all things,  
Be they near or far,  
Be they high or low;  
Lord of storm and snow,  
Angel and star.

Lord God of all men—  
My Lord and my God!  
Thou who lovest me,  
Keep me close to Thee  
By staff and rod.

Lo! new-born Jesus,  
Loving great and small,  
Love's free Sacrifice,  
Opening Arms and Eyes  
To one and all.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.



## A Christmas Carol

THE Shepherds had an Angel,  
The Wise Men had a star,  
But what have I, a little child,  
To guide me home from far,  
Where glad stars sing together,  
And singing Angels are?

Lord Jesus is my Guardian,  
So I can nothing lack:  
The lambs lie in His bosom  
Along life's dangerous track:  
The wilful lambs that go astray  
He bleeding fetches back.

Lord Jesus is my guiding star,  
My beacon light in heaven:  
He leads me step by step along  
The path of life uneven:  
He, true light, leads me to that land  
Whose day shall be as seven.

Those Shepherds through the lonely night  
Sat watching by their sheep,



Until they saw the heavenly host,  
Who neither tire nor sleep,  
All singing "Glory, glory,"  
In festival they keep.

Christ watches me, His little lamb;  
Cares for me day and night,  
That I may be His own in heaven:  
So angels, clad in white,  
Shall sing their "Glory, glory"  
For my sake in the height.

The Wise Men left their country  
To journey morn by morn,  
With gold and frankincense and myrrh,  
Because the Lord was born:  
God sent a star to guide them  
And sent a dream to warn.

My life is like their journey,  
Their star is like God's book;  
I must be like those good Wise Men  
With heavenward heart and look:  
But shall I give no gifts to God?  
What precious gifts they took!



Lord, I will give my love to Thee,  
Than gold much costlier,  
Sweeter to Thee than frankincense,  
More prized than choicest myrrh:  
Lord, make me dearer day by day,  
Day by day holier ;

Nearer and dearer day by day,  
Till I my voice unite,  
And sing my "Glory, glory"  
With angels clad in white ;  
All "Glory, glory" given to Thee  
Through all the heavenly height.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## A Christmas Carol

WHAT means this glory round our  
feet,"

The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"  
And voices chanted, clear and sweet,  
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"



“What means that star,” the Shepherds said,  
“That brightens through the rocky glen?”  
And angels, answering overhead,  
Sang, “Peace on earth, good-will to men!”

’Tis eighteen hundred years and more  
Since those sweet oracles were dumb;  
We wait for Him, like them of yore,  
Alas! he seems so slow to come!

But it was said, in words of gold,  
No time or sorrow e’er shall dim,  
That little children might be bold—  
In perfect trust to come to Him.

All round about our feet shall shine  
A light like that the Wise Men saw,  
If we our loving wills incline  
To that sweet Life which is the Law.

So shall we learn to understand  
The simple faith of shepherds then,  
And, clasping kindly hand in hand,  
Sing “Peace on earth, good-will to men!”



But they who do their souls no wrong,  
But keep at eve the faith of morn,  
Shall daily hear the angel song,  
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"  
JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Masters, in this Hall

*TO* Bethlem did they go, the shepherds  
three:  
To Bethlem did they go to see whe'r it were  
so or no,  
Whether Christ were born or no  
To set men free."

Masters, in this hall,  
Hear ye news to-day  
Brought over sea,  
And ever I you pray.  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!  
Sing we clear!  
Holpen are all folk on earth,  
Born is God's Son so dear.





Going over the hills,  
Through the milk-white snow,  
Heard I ewes bleat  
While the wind did blow.  
*Nowell, etc.*

Shepherds, many an one,  
Sat among the sheep;  
No man spake more word  
Than they had been asleep.  
*Nowell, etc.*

Quoth I, "Fellows mine,  
Why this guise sit ye?  
Making but dull cheer,  
Shepherds though ye be?  
*Nowell, etc.*

"Shepherds should, of right,  
Leap and dance and sing;  
Thus to see ye sit  
Is a right strange thing."  
*Nowell, etc.*

Quoth these fellows then:  
"To Bethlem town we go,



To see a Mighty Lord  
Lie in manger low."

*Nowell, etc.*

"His name ye this Lord,  
Shepherds?" then said I.  
"Very God," they said,  
"Come from Heaven high."

*Nowell, etc.*

Then to Bethlem town  
We went, two and two,  
And in a sorry place  
Heard the oxen low.

*Nowell, etc.*

Therein did we see  
A sweet and goodly May,  
And a fair old man;  
Upon the straw she lay.

*Nowell, etc.*

And a little CHILD  
On her arm had she;  
"Wot ye who this is?"  
Said the hinds to me.

*Nowell, etc.*



Ox and ass Him know,  
Kneeling on their knee;  
Wondrous joy had I  
This little BABE to see.

*Nowell, etc.*

This is CHRIST the Lord,  
Masters, be ye glad!  
Christmas is come in,  
And no folk should be sad.

*Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!*  
*Sing we clear!*  
*Holpen are all folk on earth,*  
*Born is God's Son so dear.*

WILLIAM MORRIS.

*(From "Ancient Christmas Carols," edited by  
Edmund Sedding.)*



## A Christmas Carol

THREE damsels in the queen's chamber,  
The queen's mouth was most fair ;  
She spake a word of God's mother  
As the combs went in her hair.  
Mary that is of might,  
Bring us to thy Son's sight.

They held the gold combs out from her,  
A span's length off her head ;  
She sang this song of God's mother  
And of her bearing-bed.  
Mary, most full of grace,  
Bring us to thy Son's face.

When she sat at Joseph's hand,  
She looked against her side ;  
And either way from the short silk band  
Her girdle was all wried.  
Mary that all good may,  
Bring us to thy Son's way.

Mary had three women for her bed,  
The twain were maidens clean ;



The first of them had white and red,  
The third had riven green.  
Mary that is so sweet,  
Bring us to thy Son's feet.

She had three women for her hair,  
Two were gloved soft and shod;  
The third had feet and fingers bare,  
She was the likest God.  
Mary that wieldeth land,  
Bring us to thy Son's hand.

She had three women for her ease,  
The twain were good women;  
The first two were the two Maries,  
The third was Magdalen.  
Mary that perfect is,  
Bring us to thy Son's kiss.

Joseph had three workmen in his stall,  
To serve him well upon;  
The first of them were Peter and Paul,  
The third of them was John.  
Mary, God's handmaiden,  
Bring us to thy Son's ken.



“If your child be none other man’s,  
But if it be very mine,  
The bedstead shall be gold two spans,  
The bedfoot silver fine.”  
Mary that made God’s mirth,  
Bring us to thy Son’s birth.

“If the child be some other man’s,  
And if it be none of mine,  
The manger shall bestraw two spans,  
Betwixen kine and kine.”  
Mary that made sin cease,  
Bring us to thy Son’s peace.

Christ was born upon this wise,  
It fell on such a night,  
Neither with sounds of psalteries  
Nor with fire for light.  
Mary that is God’s spouse,  
Bring us to thy Son’s house.

The star came out upon the east  
With a great sound and sweet.  
Kings gave gold to make Him feast  
And myrrh for Him to eat.



Mary, of thy sweet mood,  
Bring us to thy Son's good.

He had two handmaids at His head,  
One handmaid at His feet;  
The twain of them were fair and red,  
The third one was right sweet.  
Mary that is most wise,  
Bring us to thy Son's eyes.

Amen.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

## The Child Jesus

A CORNISH CAROL.

WELCOME that Star in Judah's sky,  
That voice o'er Bethlehem's palmy  
glen:

The lamp, far sages hailed on high,  
The tones that thrill'd the shepherd men:  
Glory to God in highest heaven!  
Thus Angels smote the echoing chord;  
Glad tidings unto man forgiven!  
Peace from the presence of the Lord!



The Shepherds sought that Birth divine,  
The Wise Men traced their guided way;  
There, by strange light and mystic sign,  
The God they came to worship lay.  
A human Babe in beauty smiled,  
Where lowing oxen round Him trod;  
A maiden clasped her Awful Child,  
Pure offspring of the breath of God.

Those voices from on high are mute;  
The Star the Wise Men saw is dim;  
But Hope still guides the wanderer's foot,  
And Faith renews the angel hymn:  
Glory to God in loftiest heaven!  
Touch with glad hand the ancient chord;  
Good tidings unto man forgiven,  
Peace from the presence of the Lord!

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.





## The Three Kings

THREE Kings went riding from the East,  
Through fine weather and wet;  
“And whither shall we ride,” they said,  
“Where we have not ridden yet?”

“And whither shall we ride,” they said,  
“To find the hidden thing  
That turns the course of all our stars  
And all our auguring?”

They were the Wise Men of the East,  
And none so wise as they;  
“Alas!” the King of Persia cried,  
“And must ye ride away?”

“Yet, since ye go a-riding, sire,  
I pray ye, ride for me,  
And carry me my golden gifts  
To the King o’ Galilee.

“Go riding into Palestine,  
A long ride and a fair!”  
“Tis well,” the Magi answered him,  
“As well as anywhere.”



They rode by day, they rode by night,  
The stars came out on high—  
And “Oh!” the King Balthazar said,  
As he gazed into the sky.

We ride by day, we ride by night,  
To a King in Galilee;  
We leave a King in Persia,  
And kings no less are we.

“Yet often in the deep blue night,  
When stars burn far and dim,  
I wish I knew a greater King—  
To fall and worship him.

“A King who should not care to reign,  
But wonderful and fair;  
A King—a King that were a star,  
Aloft in miles of air!”

“A star is good,” said Melchior,  
“A high, unworldly thing;  
But I would choose a soul alive  
To be my Lord and King.



“Not Herod, nay, nor Cyrus, nay,  
Not any King at all ;  
For I would choose a sinless child,  
Laid in a manger stall.”

“’Tis well !” the black King Caspar cried,  
“For mighty men are ye ;  
But no such humble King were meet  
For my simplicity.

“A star is small, and very far ;  
A babe’s a simple thing :  
The very Son of God Himself  
Shall be my Lord and King !”

The King Balthazar sighed and smiled ;  
“A good youth,” Melchior cried ;  
And young and old, without a word,  
Along the hills they ride.

Till lo ! among the western skies  
There grows a shining thing—  
“The Star ! Behold the star !” they shout.  
“Behold Balthazar’s King !”



And lo! within the western skies  
The star begins to flit;  
The three Kings spur their horses on,  
And follow after it.

And when they reach the King's castle  
They cry, "Behold the place!"  
But, like a shining bird, the star  
Flits on in heaven apace.

Oh, they rode on, and on they rode,  
Till they reached a lonely wold,  
Where shepherds keep their flocks by night,  
And the night was chill and cold.

Oh, they rode on, and on they rode,  
Till they reach a little town,  
And there the star in heaven stands still  
Above a stable brown.

And through the open door the straw  
And the tired beasts they see,  
And the Babe, laid in a manger,  
That sleepeth peacefully.



“All hail! the King of Melchior!”

The three Wise Men begin;  
King Melchior swings from his horse,  
And he would have entered in.

But why do the horses whinny and neigh?  
And what thing fills the night  
With angels in a wheeling spire,  
And streams of heavenly light?

King Melchior kneels upon the grass,  
And falls a-praying there;  
Balthazar lets the bridle drop,  
And gazes in the air.

But Caspar gives a happy shout,  
And hastens to the stall:  
“Now hail,” he cries, “Thou Son of God,  
And Saviour of us all!”

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.



## A Provençal Noel

THOU that seekest thy delight,  
Thou that lovest only pleasure,  
Wilt thou never own the leisure  
From thy lusts to part aright?  
Since that God, alas!  
Seeking nothing but His anguish—  
Since that God, alas!  
Suffers in a meager shed.

Insufficient thy domain  
For thy vanity as dwelling,  
Thou a palace shouldst be selling. . . .  
Art thou not o'erwhelmed by pain,  
Since that God, alas!  
Is contented with a stable—  
Since that God, alas!  
Lodges in a meager shed?

Deep in newly furnished tower,  
Curtains close around thee fitted—  
Neither art nor paint's omitted  
For the beauty of thy bower.



Jesus, He, alas!  
Is not to be found there present—  
Jesus, He, alas!  
Bides within a meager shed.

Dishes exquisite indeed,  
Wines most delicate of flavor—  
None there be too choice of savor  
For thy fancy or thy greed.  
Jesus, He, alas!  
Tastes the wild wind and the breezes—  
Jesus, He, alas!  
Fasts within a meager shed.

When that thou art well refresh'd  
To a beauteous couch thou hiest,  
Fine and wide, wherein thou liest,  
Decked with broidery deftly mesh'd.

But thy God, alas!  
On the scanty straw, most lowly—  
But thy God, alas!  
Lies within a meager shed.

*(Translated from the Provençal by Lady  
Lindsay.)*



## Ancient French Carol

JOSEPH and Mary went their way  
To Bethlehem full late one day.  
The folks that had hostellerie  
But little worth held them to be.

Thus all the town they wandered o'er,  
And lodging sought from door to door.  
'Twas at the hour Maid Mary should  
Be nigh unto her motherhood.

A wealthy household they essayed,  
And for some shelter humbly prayed.  
The answer made their pleading vain:  
"Bring ye a rich and stately train?"

"We have one ox, one ass alone;  
Behold them here—the beasts we own."  
"Ye seem but vagrants to my mind,  
And here no lodging shall ye find."





Then to another host they hied,  
And offered coin so they might bide;  
But once again the speech was clear:  
“Get ye from hence; ye house not here!”

There came to Joseph one that hailed  
Him as a wicked churl, and railed:  
“Where ledest her that hath in truth  
But fifteen tender years of youth?”

Gazed Joseph then where stood apart  
Mary, most dolorous of heart,  
And to her quoth he: “Dear, my dear,  
Come elsewhere, for we rest not here.

A stable shed I saw hard by;  
There may we present lodging try.”  
’Twas at the hour Maid Mary should  
Be nigh unto her motherhood.

At midnight to that Virgin mild,  
The selfsame night, was born a Child;  
In costly fur she was not gowned,  
With which to wrap Him warmly round;



But in a manger did she lay  
Him on a meager bed of hay,  
With but a stone for pillowing  
The head of Him, the mighty King.

*(Translated from the Old French by Lady  
Lindsay.)*

## A Burgundian Noel

WILLIE, take thy tamborin;  
Thou, thy flute go bring, Robin.  
Then to sound of these to-day—  
Tooralooraloo, patapatapay—  
To the sound of these to-day  
I a blithe Nowell will say.

Custom was, in time gone by,  
The King of kings to glorify;  
Then to sound of these to-day—  
Tooralooraloo, patapatapay—  
To the sound of these to-day  
We will do the selfsame way.



This morn the Devil smitten lies ;  
Let our grace to Jesu rise !  
Then to sound of these to-day—  
Tooralooraloo, patapatapay—  
To the sound of these to-day  
A grimace to Satan pay.

God and man attuned, we see,  
More than flute and tabor be.  
Then to sound of these to-day—  
Tooralooraloo, patapatapay—  
To the sound of these to-day  
Sing and dance, and leap in play.

*(Translated from the Old French by Lady  
Lindsay.)*

## Carol of the Three Kings

HERE and away in good faith we pace :  
A happy evening God give you in grace ;  
A happy evening, a joyful new year,  
That no misfortune to us come near.



And, firstly, God will we honor and praise,  
We three holy kings, with the star of our ways.  
We three holy kings, we are wearing the  
crown,  
And 'tis our purpose the best shall be done.

It happed, when Herod's house we neared,  
Herod from out of the window peered;  
Herod spake, and in loudest tone:  
"Whence do ye come? Whither would ye be  
gone?"

"Toward Bethlehem our mind we bend,  
For that came we here, and to that we wend—  
Toward Bethlehem, the city most fair—  
Our Lord the Christ He was born there."

Then Herod quoth: "Come in to me here,  
For I will give ye both wine and beer;  
Straw and hay will I give to ye,  
And all your need shall be granted free."

"Oh, no! Oh, no! Now must we be gone,  
For yonder a little young child we own,  
A little young child, a God most great,  
Who did both heaven and earth create."



And as we went upon our way  
The star quite still a while would stay.  
O star, thou must not tarry so!  
Thou must with us to Bethlehem go—  
To Bethlehem, that city most fair—  
Our Lord the Christ He was born there.  
(*Translated from the German by Lady Lindsay.*)

## Bethlehem

WHERE man was all too marred with sin,  
The ass, the ox were bidden in.

Where angels were unmeet to come,  
The humble entered Holydom.

Their innocent eyes, and full of awe,  
Saw the fulfilment of the Law.

There, in the stable with the beast,  
The Christmas Child hath spread His feast.

These gave their bed and eke their board  
To be a cradle for their Lord.



Their honey breath, their tears all mild,  
Warmed in the cold the new-born Child.

These His adorers were before  
The Kings and Shepherds thronged the door.

And where no angels knelt there kneeled  
The innocent creatures of the field.

O simple ones, much honoréd;  
He who oppresses you indeed,

Oppresses His kind hosts that lay  
Once in the stable on the hay.

KATHARINE TYNAN.

## A Carol for Christmas Eve

WE are but of such mortal mold,  
*Nos exaudi, Domine!*  
That the night can scarce withhold  
In its shrouds our sins from Thee.



That night comes, when Thou shalt come  
*Nos exaudi, Domine!*

From Thy home to this sad home,  
And die for us upon the tree.

If then the stars shine out so bright,  
*Nos exaudi, Domine!*  
That Thou seest by their light  
How great our sins and many be;

Thou wilt come, as they were not,  
*Nos exaudi, Domine!*  
Or as they were all forgot,  
Or forgiven, Lord, by Thee.

HERBERT P. HORNE.

## A Christmas Carol

THE Christ-child lay on Mary's lap  
His hair was like a light.  
Oh, weary, weary were the world,  
But here is all aright.)



The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast,  
His hair was like a star.  
(Oh, stern and cunning are the kings,  
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart,  
His hair was like a fire.  
(Oh, weary, weary is the world,  
But here the world's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,  
His hair was like a crown,  
And all the flowers looked up at Him,  
And all the stars looked down.

G. K. CHESTERTON.



## CHRISTMAS HYMNS

ETERNAL Father, who didst create,  
In whom we live and to whose bosom move,  
To all men be Thy name known, which is Love,  
Till its loud praises sound at heaven's high gate.  
Perfect Thy kingdom in our passing state,  
That here on earth Thou may'st as well approve  
Our service as Thou ownest theirs above,  
Whose joy we echo, and in pain await.

Grant body and soul each day their daily bread:  
And should in spite of grace fresh woe begin,  
Even as our anger soon is past and dead  
Be thy remembrance mortal of our sin:  
By Thee in paths of peace Thy sheep be led,  
And in the vale of terror comforted.

ROBERT BRIDGES.





## Cradle Hymn

A WAY in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His  
sweet head.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where  
He lay—

The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes.  
I love Thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from  
the sky,

And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

MARTIN LUTHER.

## Christmas

A BOVE our heads, from out the clear, deep  
sky,

The stars look down

As when of old their mellow radiance shone  
O'er Bethlehem's town.



The midnight bells peal out with solemn tone  
From every tower,  
Bidding the world with gladness to await  
The promised hour.

O lonely heart ! look up with faith renewed ;  
Thy Lord is here ;  
For now the anthem of the heavenly host  
Breaks on the ear.

Emmanuel, Redeemer, once again  
Comes to earth,  
To change its darkness by the glorious light  
That hails His birth.

Not now to Israel's race alone He comes  
With love divine ;  
To all the King of Glory shall descend,  
God's promised sign.

Lift up each voice to greet the op'ning morn  
Of this glad day ;  
The angels sing, and men with them rejoice,  
And gladly say :



“Glory to God, whose promise is fulfilled!  
To man be peace!  
For Christ our Lord begins His holy reign,  
To never cease.”

THOMAS MAIR.

## While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night

WHILE shepherds watched their flocks by  
night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.  
“Fear not!” said he, for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind,  
“Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.

“To you, in David’s town, this day  
Is born, of David’s line,  
The Saviour who is Christ the Lord,  
And this shall be the sign :



The heavenly Babe you there shall find,  
To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in swaddling bands,  
And in a manger laid."

Thus spake the seraph ; and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels, praising God, and thus  
Addressed their joyful song:  
"All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace ;  
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men  
Begin, and never cease."

N. TATE.

## For Christmas Day

**I**MMORTAL Babe, who this dear day  
Didst change Thine heaven for our clay,  
And didst with flesh Thy godhead veil,  
Eternal Son of God, all hail !

Shine, happy star ; ye angels, sing  
Glory on high to heaven's King :

Run, shepherds, leave your nightly watch!  
See heaven come down to Bethlehem's cratch!

Worship, ye sages of the east,  
The King of gods in meanness dressed!  
O blessed maid, smile and adore  
The God thy womb and arms have bore!

Star, angels, shepherds, and wise sages,  
Thou virgin glory of the ages,  
Restored frame of heaven and earth,  
Joy in your dear Redeemer's birth!

BISHOP HALL.

## Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

**H**ARK! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,



Late in time behold Him come,  
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King!

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with men to appear,  
Jesus our Immanuel here.  
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Risen with healing in His wings.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King!

Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die;  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.  
Come, Desire of nations, come,  
Fix in us Thy humble home;  
Rise, the woman's conquering Seed,  
Bruise in us the serpent's head.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King!





Adam's likeness now efface,  
Stamp Thine image in its place;  
Second Adam from above,  
Reinstate us in Thy love.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King!  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
Glory to the new-born King!

CHARLES WESLEY.

## Christians Awake! Salute the Happy Morn

CHRISTIANS, awake! Salute the happy  
morn  
Whereon the Savior of mankind was born;  
Rise to adore the mystery of love,  
Which hosts of angels chanted from above;  
With them the joyful tidings first begun  
Of God incarnate and the Virgin's Son.



Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,  
Who heard the angelic herald's voice: "Behold,

I bring good tidings of a Savior's birth  
To you and all the nations upon earth;  
This day hath God fulfilled His promised word,  
This day is born a Savior, Christ the Lord."

He spake; and straightway the celestial choir  
In hymns of joy, unknown before, conspire;  
The praises of redeeming love they sang,  
And heaven's whole orb with alleluias rang;  
God's highest glory was their anthem still:  
Peace upon earth and unto men good-will.

To Bethlehem straight the enlightened shepherds ran,  
To see the wonders God had wrought for man;  
Then to their flocks, still praising God, return,  
And their glad hearts with holy rapture burn;  
Amazed, the wondrous tidings they proclaim,  
The first apostles of His infant fame.

Oh, may we keep and ponder in our mind  
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind;

Trace we the Babe, who hath retrieved our  
loss,  
From the poor manger to the bitter cross;  
Tread in His steps, assisted by His grace,  
Till man's first heavenly state again takes place.

Then may we hope, the angelic hosts among,  
To join, redeemed, a glad, triumphant throng:  
He that was born upon this joyful day  
Around us all His glory shall display;  
Saved by His love, incessant we shall sing  
Eternal praise to heaven's almighty King.

DR. BYROM.

## The Birth at Bethlehem

WHEN Jordan hushed his waters still,  
And silence slept on Zion's Hill;  
When Bethlehem's shepherds thro' the night  
Watched o'er their flocks by starry light:

Hark! from the midnight hills around,  
A voice of more than mortal sound



In distant hallelujahs stole,  
Wild murmurings o'er the raptured soul.

On wheels of light, on wings of flame,  
The glorious hosts of Zion came ;  
High heaven with songs of triumph rung,  
While thus they struck their harps, and sung :

"O Zion, lift thy raptured eye,  
The long-expected hour is nigh ;  
Renewed, creation smiles again,  
The Prince of Salem comes to reign.

"He comes to cheer the trembling heart,  
Bid Satan and his host depart ;  
Again the Daystar gilds the gloom,  
Again the bowers of Eden bloom."

THOMAS CAMPBELL.



## A Hymn for Christmas Day

HARK, the glad sound! the Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let every heart prepare a throne,  
And every voice a song!

He comes, the prisoners to release  
In Satan's bondage held;  
The gates of brass before Him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.

He comes, the broken heart to bind,  
The bleeding soul to cure,  
And with the treasures of His grace  
T' enrich the humble poor.

Our glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heaven's eternal arches ring  
With Thy belovéd name.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.



## Christmas Day

SAVIOR, whom this holy morn  
Gave to our world below,  
To mortal want and labour born,  
And more than mortal woe ;

Incarnate Word ! by every grief,  
By each temptation tried,  
Who lived to yield our ills relief,  
And to redeem us, died !

If gaily clothed and proudly fed,  
In dangerous wealth we dwell,  
Remind us of thy manger bed  
And lowly cottage cell !

If, prest by poverty severe,  
In envious want we pine,  
Oh, may the Spirit whisper near  
How poor a lot was Thine !



Through fickle fortune's various scene  
From sin preserve us free!  
Like us Thou hast a mourner been,—  
May we rejoice with Thee!

REGINALD HEBER.

## Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning

**B**RIGHTEST and best of the Sons of the  
morning,

Dawn on our darkness, and lend us Thine  
aid:

Star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!

Cold on His cradle the dewdrops are shining;  
Low lies His head with the beasts of the  
stall;

Angels adore Him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.



Say shall we yield Him in costly devotion  
Odors of Edom and offerings divine,  
Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forests, or gold from the  
mine?

Saintly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would His favor secure;  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning,  
Dawn on our darkness, and lend us Thine  
aid:  
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,  
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid!

REGINALD HEBER.

## The Star of Bethlehem

WHEN marshal'd on the nightly plain,  
The glittering host bestud the sky;  
One Star alone, of all the train,  
Can fix the sinner's wandering eye.





Hark! hark! to God the chorus breaks,  
From every host, from every gem;  
But one alone the Saviour speaks,  
It is the Star of Bethlehem.

Once on the raging seas I rode,  
The storm was loud—the night was dark,  
The ocean yawn'd—and rudely blow'd  
The wind that toss'd my foundering bark.  
Deep horror then my vitals froze,  
Death-struck, I ceased the tide to stem;  
When suddenly a star arose,  
It was the star of Bethlehem.

It was my guide, my light, my all;  
It bade my dark forebodings cease,  
And through the storm and danger's thrall  
It led me to the port of peace.  
Now, safely moor'd—my perils o'er—  
I'll sing, first in night's diadem,  
For ever, and for evermore,  
The Star!—The Star of Bethlehem!

H. K. WHITE.



## Christmas Day

CALM on the listening ear of night  
Come heaven's melodious strains,  
Where wild Judea stretches far  
Her silver-mantled plains;  
Celestial choirs from courts above  
Shed sacred glories there,  
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,  
Make music on the air.

The answering hills of Palestine  
Send back the glad reply,  
And greet from all their holy heights  
The day-spring from on high:  
O'er the blue depths of Galilee  
There comes a holier calm,  
And Sharon waves in solemn praise  
Her silent groves of palm.

Glory to God! the lofty strain  
The realm of ether fills;  
How sweeps the song of solemn joy  
O'er Judah's sacred hills!



“Glory to God!” the sounding skies  
Loud with their anthems ring:  
“Peace on earth, good-will to men,  
From heaven’s eternal King.”

Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!  
The Savior now is born:  
More bright on Bethlehem’s joyous plains  
Breaks the first Christmas morn;  
And brighter on Moriah’s brow,  
Crowned with her temple spires,  
Which first proclaim the new-born light,  
Clothed with its orient fires.

This day shall Christian tongues be mute,  
And Christian hearts be cold?  
O catch the anthem that from heaven  
O’er Judah’s mountains rolled!  
When nightly burst from seraph harps  
The high and solemn lay—  
“Glory to God, on earth be peace;  
Salvation comes to-day!”

EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS.



## O Little Town of Bethlehem

O LITTLE town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee to-night.

For Christ is born of Mary,  
And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth!  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,  
The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven.



No ear may hear His coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still,  
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in—  
Be born in us to-day.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Emmanuel!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

## A Christmas Hymn

### I.

[ T was in the calm and silent night!—  
Seven hundred years and fifty-three  
Had Rome been growing up to might,  
And now was queen of land and sea!



No sound was heard of clashing wars,  
Peace brooded o'er the hushed domain;  
Apollo, Pallas, Jove and Mars,  
Held undisturbed their ancient reign,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

## II.

'Twas in the calm and silent night!  
The senator of haughty Rome  
Impatient urged his chariot's flight,  
From lordly revel rolling home.  
Triumphal arches gleaming, swell  
His breast with thoughts of boundless sway;  
What recked the ROMAN what befell  
A paltry province far away,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

## III.

Within that province far away  
Went plodding home a weary boor;  
A streak of light before him lay,  
Fall'n through a half-shut stable door



Across his path. He passed—for naught  
Told him what was going on within.  
How keen the stars! his only thought;  
The air, how calm and cold and thin,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

## IV.

O strange indifference!—low and high  
Drowsed over common joys and cares:  
The earth was still—but knew not why;  
The world was listening—unawares!  
How calm a moment may precede  
One that shall thrill the world for ever!  
To that still moment none would heed;  
Man's doom was linked no more to sever,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

## V.

It *is* the calm and solemn night!  
A thousand bells ring out, and throw  
Their joyous peals abroad, and smite  
The darkness, charmed and holy *now*!



The night that erst no name had worn,  
To it a happy name is given;  
For in that stable lay, new-born,  
The peaceful Prince of Earth and Heaven,  
In the solemn midnight,  
Centuries ago!

ALFRED DOMETT.

## Carol, Carol, Tenderly

CAROL, carol, tenderly and sweetly,  
Over the mountain, over the wold;  
Let the jubilant message fleetly  
Now in castle and cot be told:  
*Christ the Lord is born, and He  
Dons our poor humanity.*

Hark! the tidings of Christmas ringing  
East and west, and from land to land;  
While we villager lads go singing,  
Under the starlight, hand in hand:  
*Christ the Lord is born, and He  
Dons our poor humanity.*





Angels sang of the coming glory  
Years ago, in far Bethlehem;  
Kings and shepherds retold the story—  
We would echo it back to them:  
*Christ the Lord is born, and He  
Dons our poor humanity.*

LADY LINDSAY.

## Happy Shepherds

HAPPY shepherds, pipe and trill!  
So your earth-tuned melody  
Join the angels' harmony,  
Far beyond yon snow-bound hill.

*(Praise to God and peace on earth:  
Christ is come of mortal birth.)*

Happy shepherds, kneel and pray!  
First to you the message given,  
First for you the song from heaven,  
On that blessed Christmas Day.



*(Praise to God and peace on earth:  
Christ is come of mortal birth.)*

Set in silver, as a gem,  
Gleams among the stars yon star;  
Ride the wise kings from afar  
Toward the Babe in Bethlehem.

*(Praise to God and peace on earth:  
Christ is come of mortal birth.)*

In a manger's grassy bed  
He, the Lord of Life and Time,  
Lord of each wide world and clime,  
Meekly chose to lay His head.

*(Praise to God and peace on earth:  
Christ is come of mortal birth.)*

LADY LINDSAY.



## Christmas, Prithee

CHRISTMAS, prithee, be thou drest  
In thy best—  
Snowy wimple, snowy gown—  
Laying down  
Flooring pure and white, to greet  
Jesus's feet.  
*Gloria in Excelsis.*

Bid thy frosty handmaids bear  
Through the air  
Cloth of silver for thy veil  
Clear and frail,  
While the robins welcome sing  
To thy King.  
*Gloria in Excelsis.*

Angels o'er thy radiant brow  
Leaning low,  
Joyous, carol once again  
Sweet refrain,  
Seeing our dark earth so fair:  
"Peace be there,  
*Gloria in Excelsis.*"

LADY LINDSAY.



## Hymn for the Nativity

HAPPY night and happy silence downward  
softly stealing,

Softly stealing over land and sea,  
Stars from golden censers swing a silent eager  
feeling

Down on Judah, down on Galilee;  
And all the wistful air, the earth and sky,  
Listened, listened for the gladness of a cry.

Holy night, a sudden flash of light its way is  
winging :

Angels, angels, all above, around;  
Hark, the angel voices, hark, the angels voices  
singing,

And the sheep are lying on the ground.  
Lo! all the wistful air and earth and sky  
Listen, listen to the gladness of the cry.

Happy night at Bethlehem; soft little hands  
are feeling,

Feeling in the manger with the kine :



Little hands, and eyelids closed in sleep, while  
angels kneeling,

Mary mother, hymn the Babe Divine.  
Lo! all the wistful air and earth and sky  
Listen, listen to the gladness of the cry.

Wide, as if the light were music, flashes adoration:

“Glory be to God, nor ever cease.”  
All the silence thrills, and speeds the message  
of salvation:

“Peace on earth, good-will to men of peace.”  
Lo! all the wistful air and earth and sky  
Listen, listen to the gladness of the cry.

Holy night, thy solemn silence evermore enfoldeth

Angel songs and peace from God on high:  
Holy night, thy watcher still with faithful eye  
beholdeth

Wings that wave, and angel glory nigh.  
Lo! hushed is strife in air and earth and sky,  
Still thy watchers hear the gladness of the  
cry,



Praise Him, ye who watch the night, the silent  
night of ages :

Praise Him, shepherds, praise the Holy  
Child ;

Praise Him, ye who hear the light, O praise  
Him all ye sages ;

Praise Him, children, praise Him, meek and  
mild.

Lo ! peace on earth, glory to God on high—  
Listen, listen to the gladness of the cry.

EDWARD THRING.

THE END

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